THE LIFE OF PAUL OF TARSUS

MARY LARRIMER

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BY

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THE LIFE OF PAUL OF TARSUS

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". . . For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

ISAIAH 11:9

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THE LIFE OF PAUL OF TARSUS

CHAPTER I

A CHILD OF CILICIA

THE autobiography of Paul, the beloved apostle, contained in his epistles, reveals a great inner sanctuary of close discipleship to the Christ mind. With the golden key of demonstrable Christianity, Paul opened wide the portals of Christian churches to all mankind. His human footsteps led him up to the mount of clear vision and understanding, qualifying him to interpret human action spiritually and leave lessons of importance for the pages of immortality. A shroud of tradition envelops his early life, but an illuminating stream of light issued from his mature consciousness, enlightening and reflecting a healing lustre into the dark places of earth. Through the lives of Jesus, Saint John the Divine, and Paul, early Christianity became firmly established.

At the time Paul was born in Tarsus, by the river

Cydnus of Cilicia, Jesus was a gentle little boy, living in the peaceful glen of Galilee. How far apart their childhood days were in the background of thought as well as of distance! Tarsus was then a bustling city on the banks of the Cydnus, upon whose glistening wide surface cargoes of incoming and outgoing goods moved to and fro daily. When he was eight days old, his father and mother gave him two names: Saul and Paul. "Saul" was the one they preferred, because Saul, the first king of the Jews, was especially beloved by Paul's father, who bore himself proudly as one of the tribe of Benjamin. Later, "Saul" was changed to "Paul" in token of his change of religion.

The naming of a son was a glad event in every Jewish home. A neighborhood supper followed the family festivities to which friends were invited to rejoice with the proud parents. Baptism, such as we are familiar with, was not the ceremony observed, but rather the circumcision, as required by the strict law of the Jews. Much emphasis was put upon this ceremony, because the words of Moses concerning it were interpreted to mean that no son without this mark of circumcision could enter heaven. So rigidly was this custom

kept, that it proved a Jewish stumbling-block to membership in the Christian church.

By the first big event in his baby days, Paul became identified with the strictest sect of Pharisees, for he was now a circumcised member of his tribe, in duty bound to the absolutely literal practice of all the commands of Moses, and obedience to all the dictums of priest and teacher. Strict religious regulations dominated even the household routine which protected, governed, and influenced Paul's early life.

As is customary in all countries during the tender years of life, the principal care of Paul fell to his mother. Every maternal desire and effort was directed toward training her boy to be a good Jew, dedicated to the service of God. This fervent desire, her daily petition, was to be answered, but not in the manner which she pictured to herself during this early period of her boy's life.

Paul enjoyed accompanying his mother on her many errands to market, field, and spring. It was a merry little lad with sharp, grey eyes, and hair of ebony, who would perch himself upon his mother's shoulders or patter along at her side over the hot stones, holding her skirts when an uneven

step threatened a tumble. The mother was proud of her rosy-cheeked son. She fondly believed that he would grow up to be a great man of God. This maternal confidence in Paul's divine vocation proved a very lasting influence in his life.

Like all little boys, he loved to dig his toes into the dirt and to pick up sticks and stones and throw them to test his strength. When his small legs were firm enough for him to walk without wabbling or tumbling, his mother took him with her to the synagogue.

Tenderly she would wash his small feet, as ceremonial rule commanded, before they were qualified to sit together behind the screen of stone lattice and, unobserved, watch the men in front. Although a white veil covered the mother's head, her intent dark eyes easily distinguished Paul's father in the company of men within, sitting upon the stone floor gazing up into the grave face of the teacher, who sat upon a raised platform. When Paul's soft lips were only just beginning to form wee words at his mother's coaxing, he first heard the teacher pray and read and preach. He understood little of what he heard, but his mother told him more simply about the sacred truths. As she taught him,

holy dreams of the coming glory of his manhood filled her heart — ambitious dreams of love for her boy! As she gazed through the stone lattice, a lustre came into her eyes at the thought that some day her grown son would be out there among the men, and then, a little later, he would become their teacher, the greatest of them all. The greatest of them all!

He began to walk in the path his people had laid out. He was a city child, who was to grow up amid the din of crowds and to brush elbows with men of all sorts, in treading its restless pavements. But he came to know also the beautiful environs of Tarsus. Child eyes watched from the windows of their home the seasonal changes of coloring in the hills. Even on the hottest days in Tarsus, snow-covered peaks could be outlined against the blue skies. On a clear day the Mediterranean Sea sparkled in the distance like a sapphire worn by Cilicia on its bosom. The lower slopes of the lofty hills around Tarsus were clothed with velvety green pines and belts of fir, while oak, sycamore, ash, and walnut trees in matted thickness engaged the vision along the roads. In the springtime, the Cydnus river gushed and foamed its dashing way downward, enticing

smaller, less daring streams to follow in the wake of its rush to the sea below. Tapering poplar-trees swayed like brave sentinels by the riverside. The foliage of cypress, mulberry, apple, cherry, pomegranate, and of the silver olive was there also, to assist nature in achieving the miracle of her aeolian symphonies.

Paul early became responsive to the music of trees and birds and streams. He lingered with the others in the dancing shadows beneath boughs where little children loved to play. Pastures, fields of nodding grain, and yielding vineyards dotted the rich meadows by the riverside. The honeysuckle, which sent its fragrance into the country air, served to intertwine the branches of the trees so that they choired in unison with the song of the breezes. Wild vines in their creepings traced designs upon the trees and walls which they caressed. Huts for stock were scattered here and there in search of protection, nestling in fruit orchards or securely surrounded by walls of stone or lofty hedges.

The Tarsus of Paul's childhood was a busy, prosperous city. As a lad of five, he loved to walk down to the waterside, and watch the big ships with their strange cargoes enter the harbor

and sail up the great, wide river. There were many well-landscaped gardens and beautifully built palaces on the banks of the Cydnus. And at this time Tarsus possessed an open-air theatre, one of the first in all history. Famous schools congregated in the city. Platonists, Peripatetics, and Epicureans taught their respective systems. Their curriculum, called Encyclopaedic, covered rhetoric, mathematics, ethics, dialectics, grammar, music, various forms of athletics, which included boxing, racing, and swimming, and famous courses in poetry and oratory. Tarsus had been renowned as a city of culture long before Paul's birth in the narrow little street where his countrymen lived and closely observed their own sacred laws. But to-day, Tarsus is nothing but a prosaic, sleepy, Turkish town of little importance, with few signs that it was once one of the most famous cities of the Roman Empire.

Homer is said to have spent some time there, as did Aristotle, the great philosopher, and Sophocles, the tragic poet of Greece. Cicero, Euclid, Horace, Vergil, Archimedes, and Phidias, the sculptor, all knew Tarsus. Paul probably drank from these wells of knowledge in his own schooldays, but his mother was his first teacher.

His innocent child mind opened itself naturally to her instructions. Her Jewish idealism wove the pattern of her religious life deeply into its texture. Duty was a prime essential to her; strict obedience, a law. He was admonished that the Bible was to be reverenced and studied. While he could not always follow the lessons chanted in the synagogue, comprising the laws of Moses and the traditions, his mother explained them little by little, the best she could, and time clarified them. He began the work of obedience to them with characteristic zeal, learning to lisp verses of the Psalms very early.

On summer evenings a warm glow of the setting sun, against the hills back of Tarsus, mantled the departing day in pastel shades of beauty. Then night bedecked her robe with stars for jewels. Those bewitching Tarsus nights on the flat housetop at his mother's side, Paul always remembered. There it was that he first heard the stories of David, the shepherd boy, who slew a bear and then a lion that came to kill his father's sheep, and who later succeeded Saul as king. Intently he listened to the tale of Solomon, the wisest of Jewish kings, who, at the time of his anointing, caused a seat for his mother to be placed at his

right hand before all the people; also of the ancient prophet, Elijah, who hid in a cave because of the threats of the people against his life, and was fed by the wild ravens. Paul thus got to know of the beautiful Queen Esther, the daughter of a poor Jew, who became queen of Persia and saved the lives of all her exiled countrymen in that kingdom. The Eastern idyll of Ruth, the daughter of the accursed Moab, of a race excluded from the congregation, who married Boaz, of the first family of the tribe of Judah, and became the grandmother of David, the shepherd king, this and other traditions of his race gave the lad his conception of life.

With special tenderness the mother told Paul the story of little Samuel, dedicated also, like her own son, to God's service by his mother, and taken to live with the priests in the tent of God while still a small boy. In his manhood Samuel became a great prophet and so great was his influence that he appointed Saul king of Israel.

Ezra and Nehemiah, the Puritans of Jewish history, also became familiar figures to the boy in these enjoyable story-telling hours.

When the crisp winter nights came, the wooden

shutters of the small windows were tightly drawn to keep out sharp winds, and the family sat about an oil lamp, snug and comfortable indoors. The mother's nimble fingers would be spinning blue wool for garments for Paul and her several other children. Love traced every stitch as she sewed, and carefully embroidered threads of blue and bright red around the neck of Paul's coat, which reminded her of Joseph's coat of many colors.

At such a time she told Paul the story of that shepherd boy; how his unprincipled brothers sold him for a slave, and of his becoming, later, the chief officer of the great king, Pharaoh. He heard the story, well loved by all children, of Moses, the beautiful Hebrew babe, who was found by an Egyptian princess, floating in a basket amongst the reeds at the side of the river Nile, and brought up, by her, as her own child. In his manhood days this chosen leader stood before the great Pharaoh and demanded that he should set free all the Jews who were slaves in Egypt. Then one dark night he was solemnly assured, for the angel of Death passed through the land.

Paul listened with a child's awe and wonder, to the tale of this memorable night and the name of "Passover" it received because that dark angel

had passed over all the Jewish houses while he had taken the first-born from every Egyptian home. The next day, so the tale ran, King Pharaoh ordered them to leave the country, and Moses led them out. At a mountain named Sinai, in the midst of billowing clouds of smoke, Moses obtained ten great commandments, to be forever known as the Commandments of God. They were written on two flat stones, significant of indestructibility. All Jewish children were told of the magnificence of the temple at Jerusalem, and they were early inspired with the hope of some day visiting it. Her boy could not understand why tears glistened in his mother's eyes as she told him how Maccabean heroes roused the people to throw off the foreign yoke, and of their losing the battle for freedom, after the hated Romans had conquered their beloved country.

From his mother, Paul learned of the prophecy regarding a Messiah who was to be the Saviour of their country, and to succeed in driving out the Romans. The mother explained to him how the day of deliverance would be postponed until the day they became a holy people. Indeed she spoke the truth, for right-mindedness, right-heartedness, and righteousness of soul alone deliver and set free.

There are no stories so treasured, no ideas so inwrought, and no ambitions so deep-seated as those our minds receive in childhood from mother lips. Much that Paul expressed throughout his early life was but a harvest from these first sowings of his mother's thoughts.

A parchment bearing the inscription: "Hear, O Israel, God is One God," rested in a bright metal box several inches long, fastened securely to the side of the door of their house. Every one who went in or out lifted his hand and touched it reverently, and his finger caressed it significantly as he murmured a prayer. Even before Paul could speak, he tried to reach the shining box with his tiny hand in passing, as he observed the others doing. As soon as he learned to walk, he was taught to kneel in prayer with his face toward Jerusalem. With hands upraised together he would repeat the same morning and evening prayers which his mother had been taught in her own girlhood.

This Paul was an alert, curious lad. He wanted to know things. For instance, why his face should always be turned in the direction of Jerusalem. His mother willingly explained that it was because God dwelt in a great golden temple there, behind

a great purple curtain. He was told of a prophet named Daniel who prayed night and morning, while exiled in Babylon, with his window opened toward Jerusalem and who, because he would not obey the king's order to refrain from this worship, was cast into a den of lions. Daniel was so confident that God's power was with him that the lions felt his fearlessness and did not harm him. All of Daniel's many previous fervent prayers contributed to encase his soul in the panoply of loving protection which served him so well in that experience. As in all ages, complete surrender to God's care warded off harm from him.

All too soon, the mother thought, Paul grew old enough for his teaching to be taken from her exclusive care, and shared with a man instructor. Tarsus rabbis advised the parents, at the time he was between five and six years of age, that he should begin work which would prepare him to become a pupil in the synagogue school. The father was appointed his chief instructor for this important period.

At this point Paul began to memorize religious songs and sayings of the Jews. Every well-brought-up Jewish youth could repeat from a hundred to several thousand. He began with the

Commandments, which he recited to his mother, then continued through the Old Testament, and the collection of traditional explanations of the meaning of what he had memorized, outlined by learned rabbis. At five years of age Paul began a course of study which was to continue for twenty-five years and grow more profound as he progressed.

It was a Sabbath custom for Paul to climb upon his father's knee and recite for his parents all the verses he had learned during the preceding week. The beaming face of the proud mother was never at any great distance during these recitations.

Paul learned how Moses stood in the open camp space between black tents, under the shadow of the mountain of clouds and fire, and summoned the people to choose between happiness and sorrow. "I set before you this day a blessing and a curse: a blessing if you obey the commandments of God as I command you this day: a curse if you will not obey them, but turn aside from the true way to follow after idols."

As he studied the Psalms, Paul was thrilled to learn that they were written to be sung to the music of silver trumpets by bands of white-robed Levites and boys, as they stood on the wide, white steps of the golden temple, while worshipping

people listened in the wide, open square below, in religious stillness and half-reverential fear.

When little Paul was six, a bearded stranger began his instruction. He was now going to school. Unlike a modern school, the classroom was a dingy alcove of the synagogue, which was without seats or desks, and no pictures decorated its monotonous walls. No books were used; it was all memory work to be learned by rote. The studying which Paul did from five until six prepared him to recite in the synagogue classes. This memorizing of the entire contents of five books of the Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, called the Pentateuch, constituted Paul's early Biblical training. They were written with a stylus or pen, on broad rolls of parchment resembling wall-paper, and were kept rolled up upon two sticks when not in use. Learned teachers knew accurately every word of the five books, which were also known as "The Books of the Laws."

CHAPTER II

THE MOLD OF TRADITION

WHEN Paul left his home to begin school, his mother felt a pang of sadness, for the child presence had meant a great joy to her. Commencing his studies under learned priests at six indicated that he would continue with them until he reached manhood. The mother, at various times, paused at the synagogue and proudly looked through the doorway to see her son, in his bright homemade little jacket, sitting cross-legged among twenty or more boys of the city. Little students looked up toward a raised platform where their teacher sat solemnly nodding his kerchiefed head. The children's singsong lesson repetitions resounded in her ears as she returned home through a secluded thoroughfare.

It was some time before this, that the mother had made Paul's prayer shawl, patterned after that of his father. Smaller in size than the father's, it had blue tassels at the corners, and was worn beneath his tunic. Paul realized that he

must never don the shawl in the morning without repeating an appropriate short prayer.

On Thursdays and Sundays when he went to synagogue service, he wore his best tunic of striped blue and yellow and green. His thick black hair hung about his shoulders over the shawl, which was carefully made of thin cloth of one solid color with eight threads of wool dyed a hyacinth blue, signifying the belief that God's throne was of that color.

Fringe and tassels were regarded as sacred accessories of the Jewish wardrobe. Paul was taught the proper placement of the shawl about his head for prayers in the synagogue. He knew well the verses in which Moses commanded the people to wear tassels on their garments. During the prayer hour in the temple synagogue, little boys reverently raised tassels to their lips. On sunny mornings when Paul donned his tiny shawl, and a large outer one, he repeated: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord, King of the world, who hast made us perfect with Thy commandments and hast given us the law of fringes."

The shawls signified that the owner was one of God's chosen ones. There is little wonderment that Paul's attitude early became distinctly Pharisaical. He was instructed that other faiths were

evil and valueless. His school was called "The Vineyard," because young students were likened unto vines that had to be guided and taught to climb and bear fruit.

Naturally Paul spoke Hebrew at home with his family, and also learned Greek, the language of the townspeople. Parental customs became his own. He learned the reason why his people watched the blue sky eagerly for a first sight of the new moon, why his mother lighted a candle for each one in the house on a certain night, and then for eight nights the number of candles was increased until all their home was illumined with candle-light. How that light shone upon the laws of Moses for the worshippers! Reverence was inspired through reviewing the historical record of Moses' leadership.

He had led the Jews out of slavery in Egypt and they had wandered about forty years living in tents, either sheltered by huge mountain rocks, or spread out on the warm space of shifting prodigal sands. Moses brought them up to the mountains in Moab and showed them beautiful Canaan which he promised would some day be their own.

The land with its green vales and sparkling

streams afforded a refreshing sight and became known as "a land flowing with milk and honey." Moses died on Mount Nebo. Joshua, the fighting leader, brought his people across the Jordan River to territory approaching Jericho, to conquer the land. Moses had instructed them to fight and destroy all the people of the country — men, women, and children — sparing no one. The tribes of Amalekites, Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites, and Canaanites possessed the land, and Moses' followers were not permitted to have anything to do with the foreigners nor with any of the idols they worshipped.

Of course Paul asked if it were not cruel to slay and to destroy, but he received parental assurance that in that particular instance it was the commandment of God according to Moses, therefore right. At a very early age he was convinced that the Jews were God's chosen people, and that it was wrong to have anything whatever to do with strangers. Paul read well at the age of eight. He learned his letters by tracing them on smooth sand; and was then entitled to a piece of wood for class use. His father decided at this time that he was old enough to read the cherished books of Moses correctly, so he brought out the large brown

roll from a box. Pride reigned in the household as Paul read about the Tabernacle, the divine tent in which people worshipped God — a tent that was made of strong purple cloth and wild-animal skins dyed scarlet — and with a mysterious cloud ever hanging over it!

Paul spent many hours splashing and swimming in the river, for he thoroughly enjoyed outdoor sports, and in Tarsus he witnessed many skilled athletic contests. In the autumn he went with his father to the vineyards. He watched the workers cut great strong clusters of purple grapes from the vines and toss them into baskets. He knew where the grapes grew wild, and often his chubby hands gathered them to eat with his brown bread.

The world moves before youth's gaze as a magnified, marvelous pageant, and this was true in Paul's experience. An intense love of the water and boats surged within the lad. For hours he stood mute upon the wharf, watching the boats move up the river. He liked to watch for small wooden figureheads attached to the front of boats, used by superstitious sailors as talismen. Foreign ships with wide eyes painted on one side entered the harbor. He saw strong men with copper-red faces from Egypt, blacks from Africa, and merry singing

fellows in red and blue caps from distant ports of the isles of Crete, of Cyprus and of Rhodes. Numerous sailors were there from distant ports of Italy, Greece, Syria, and Palestine. The boy realized that the world of men was vast, for his speculative eyes saw many evidences of that fact. Throngs of men passed the waterfront, marketing their wares. Mules moped by, carrying upon their backs oil and wines in black leather bottles and red earthenware. Paul chuckled when shouting signals of an eager pilot rang out, followed by those of the captain and jolly replies from sailors who were eager to cast off ropes and press out to sea again. Paul loved the sea and its men. The harbor of Tarsus was an intensely interesting place, and for the remainder of his life it recalled the vibrating impressions of his childhood.

All children of Tarsus were told the story of the most wonderful ship that ever entered the harbor. It was that of Cleopatra, the beautiful queen of Egypt, who entered Tarsus to meet the renowned general, Mark Antony. That happened many years before Paul was born, but he was familiar with the story. What an entrance Cleopatra had made in her gorgeous floating palace! Old residents of Tarsus delighted in unraveling the

yarn to the youth of the day. Both sides of the river were massed with curious, bobbing human beings on that memorable day of Cleopatra's arrival, as crowds now congregate for modern regattas.

Cleopatra was famous for her beauty and wealth. It was a perfect day when the enchanting boat floated across the water sparkling with dancing sunbeams, beneath a gold-streaked sky. The first glimpse the crowds caught of the boat was of a tall mast with streaming ribbons of crimson, blue, and yellow. Then the purple sails, looped up with white ropes, appeared as the golden boat moved in close to shore. On the gilded bow rising high out of the water appeared a bevy of lovely girls in robes of glistening golden yellow, pale green, and blue tones of the sea. They represented sea maidens, and won much admiration for their beauty.

Large, broad oars dipped deeply into the placid water and languidly lifted into the sunlight as the people gasped, for the oars were of pure, shining silver, which flashed and dipped in costly rhythm to sweet melodies floating from harps and flutes on board. The high stern of the boat, shaped like a house, was covered with sparkling jewels. Little boys representing Cupid wore shining roses

and snowy white wings and fanned the queen with enormous fans of peacock feathers. Cleopatra came to Tarsus to charm as Venus, the queen of love, and naught but loveliness surrounded her entourage. Her lips were carefully tinted, her eyebrows blackened, and her finger-tips stained with crocus.

Paul wondered, as he stood on the bank of the Cydnus, just how that golden boat had looked as it sailed majestically into the harbor. He pictured it vividly with his mind's eye.

Tarsus held fairs in those days. Certain seasons brought shepherds down from the hills to sell long-haired sheep, black and white goats, horses, asses, camels, pigs, and cattle. The city shops surrounded an open square. They had open stalls, movable sheds, and tables with tent-canopy shades of color combinations of brown and black or yellow and red over them for protection from intense summer heat or sudden mercurial showers. Paul's father was a prosperous tent-maker. He rendered some service to the Romans and was honored with Roman citizenship, which naturally became Paul's also. His patrons included many Romans as well as Jews. He combined the business of weaving with that of tent-making. Cilicium

was the strong haircloth utilized for tent-covers. It was manufactured from the long hair of Cilician goats which fed among the hills.

Paul accompanied his father to his shop to watch the work there, because he understood that in future years he must follow the vocation of his father. Sandal-makers and slipper-makers worked in a shed in the market place. A man, sitting cross-legged on the floor, cut up hides with a sharp knife, sewing them together with needle and thread. Makers of saddles and harnesses were there, weavers of carpets, rugs, shawls, and fine scarves — thick wool for men and thin white linen for girls — and strong goat's-hair cloth designed for ship sails and shepherds' tents. The "hand of the potter" was there also, spinning jugs and bowls on muddy wheels, with a display of fine dishes and cups of all sizes and shapes. Dagger-makers, cabinet-makers, bakers and confectioners, perfumers, and barbers carried on their various activities there.

There was one spot in Tarsus where tragedy breathed the hot breath of injustice and agony. It was the slave-market of Tarsus. What were Paul's thoughts as he watched young boys and girls being sold in the market, families being separated never again to be united? To the child

mind, slavery meant an accepted custom. He was to gain in maturity the real interpretation of freedom.

Friday was a reverenced day in Paul's home. His father left his work early and, upon arriving home, his wife, Paul, and the others of the family were dressed in their best clothes. The special dinner of the day was served on a white table-cloth. The Sabbath lamp cast cheerful rays across fresh blossoms, warm baked bread, and wine. When the father entered, he touched the little bright box at the door and kissed his finger, saying, "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in." His hand rested lovingly upon Paul's head as he said, "May God make thee as Ephraim and Manasseh!" The blessing poured upon the head of Paul's sister was "May God make thee as Sarah and Rebekah!"

Their Sabbath always began when the sun sank beyond the hills and a first star sparkled as prologue to shadowing night. A trumpet then sounded from the synagogue while silver trumpets resounded simultaneously from the roofs of the golden temple far away in Jerusalem. The father asked a blessing to rest upon all the household, before sitting down to their meal. One of the chil-

dren held a basin of water into which the father poured a cup of red wine. The family stood around the basin and tasted of the wine, as the father repeated a few words of God's law, pertaining to the Sabbath day. Then breaking the fresh bread, he dipped a small piece into salt before he handed it to each one of the family.

Then they sat down to their meal, which consisted of soup, fish, bread, milk, fruit, and raisin wine. Later, they all joined in thanksgiving chanting.

They believed that any man laboring on the Sabbath well deserved the death penalty. There was a well-known story of the man who was found on the Sabbath gathering sticks for a fire and who was punished, as Moses ordered, by being stoned outside the camp of black tents.

When the morning of the Sabbath dawned, no smoke was seen to emerge in ascending circles from chimneys of the Jews' dwellings as on other days. Paul's father believed it sinful to carry a walking-stick on the Sabbath day. As he grew, Paul began to study his father's conduct in the synagogue. He carefully watched the service through the screen and saw his father enter and take off his shoes and tie his phylacteries on arm and brow

before walking to a seat in front of the beautiful curtain. Singing in the synagogue was permissible only on festival days.

Paul watched Roman soldiers with fascinated gaze, for they were picturesque in their glittering uniforms, and generally inspired a sense of awe in him. But his father frowned upon the debaucheries and wild revelries which commemorated their numerous queens and idols. Roman idolatry was revolting to quiet God-fearing Jews of Tarsus.

Paul reverenced their Jewish festivities which were so enriched with sacred meaning. The festival of First-Fruits occurred every June. At that time children went to the synagogue with their small necks bedecked with flowers of red and blue, and carrying garlands in their hands. Hundreds of small white willow baskets were placed before the wonderful curtain and the altar's constantly burning lamp. The fruits and grain were a thank offering to God for the first and best of the year's produce. Each month there was the celebration known as the festival of the new moon. "Blessed art Thou, O God, who renewest the moons!" The first new moon of the year was greeted with the merriment of trumpet-blowing, and this glad season was known as the festival of trumpets.

Paul learned the oral traditions, besides the five books of the Old Testament. At ten years he had mastered the Bible and read perfectly in two languages. He read of Samson, the Jewish judge, who was said to have tied brands to the tails of foxes which ran into the Philistines' corn, and of Jehu's furious chariot-driving which terrified the people.

The elder sister of Paul seemed closer to him, in his early life, than other children of the family. Eventually she became betrothed when he was a lad in his teens. Notice was given in the synagogue some weeks before the marriage ceremony, and when the chosen Wednesday arrived, there was rejoicing. The young girl was bedecked with flowers and covered entirely with a thick white veil over her white wedding gown. She awaited the coming of the bridegroom in their home, which was decorated lavishly for the event, and filled with merry guests.

Friends of the bridegroom furnished singing, dancing, and the music of clashing cymbals and clicking castanets. Families and guests appeared in their richest festival attire. The delicately perfumed bridegroom arrived, with his long, black hair oiled and curled beneath an appropriate flower wreath. He led the bride from her parental home

with pomp, and, amid cheers of the merrymakers, he placed her upon the ass which waited to carry her safely to his own home. A procession of young girls bearing lanterns on thin sticks joined in the celebration and marched along toward the bridegroom's abode. Upon their arrival there, the bride was tenderly carried from the saddle of the ass into the house. The marriage feast then followed, during which the bride sat coyly at the groom's side, the veil still covering her face.

Paul was now old enough to celebrate the week of the Passover with his father. It was a festival time in April, when flowers blanketed the ground, a renewal season much loved in Tarsus.

The Festival of Tabernacles was spectacular. This observance, as recorded in the Bible presents the first definite Thanksgiving season specifically set aside for the purpose of praising God for his manifold blessings. In Tarsus, the festival came in torrid October, when vineyards groaned with royal abundance of purple grapes beneath a hot autumn sun. Children accompanied their parents into the woods and watched them cut large branches from silvery olive-grey willows, palms, myrtle-trees, and fir-trees, which they carried home for their house-roof festival bowers and open court-

yards. Ropes of flowers were hung along the street walls, and colorful garlands draped from house to house in the streets of the Jewish quarters.

The experience of the ancient Israelites in tents inspired this yearly celebration of the Festival of Tabernacles. Reverently they commemorated the wandering of their ancestors across the changing, yellow desert sands, and their tenting against bare rocks of the great empty spaces. The gay arrangement of the streets and yards enabled the Jews to move from their houses and live in temporary bowers for a week or longer. October nights were superb with perfect moonlight which shone as a shadowed day of magic silver. The season was spent in joyful thanksgiving; children laughed and danced in the sunbeams that filtered through the leafy layers of the green canopy. At night the magic October moon smiled a blessing upon them in these narrow streets where traditions lived with burning fervor.

The keynote of Paul's early life was an intense love of religious worship. He believed that the "greatest thing in the world" was to worship God with all the heart and soul and mind, and to keep the commandments of Moses.

CHAPTER III

SACRED PILGRIMAGE

GREAT preparations stirred within Paul's home when his father decided to join the pilgrims on their yearly trip to the golden temple of Jerusalem. The father went into the deep woods and cut a thick stick as tall as himself to carry with him. He mended the harness of the ass very carefully and hung fresh, new tassels of red, yellow, and green at the little animal's neck, and new fringe over his nose. The Tarsus pilgrims started their sacred journey toward Jerusalem in the early dawn. Paul and his mother journeyed with them to the outskirts of the city to bid farewell to the father. Thousands of men, waving palms, and animals heavily laden, moved forward with their gifts for the beloved golden temple. What a sight for the lad! With his mother he watched them march on into the distance, to the rhythm of their song. Slowly the multitude of green palm-branches disappeared on the winding road toward Adana, and the low murmur of distant voices whispered into silence.

The holy city with its golden temple! To visit the golden temple was the hope of every good Jew. Pilgrims from all countries of the earth poured into the golden portals once a year to pay tribute and commune with God.

As Paul and his mother returned home, they stopped and watched the foaming sprays of the Falls of Cydnus burst in shining crystals over grey rocks. Drooping ferns and soft mosses covered damp rocks with bronze and emerald gilt. Paul must have been thrilled with the grandeur of it all, as American boys are with the vision of Yosemite Falls, foaming, leaping, gurgling with the laugh of centuries, or of Niagara with its all pervading mist. Divine creation spoke to the lad from all of nature's nooks and crannies. He learned well to "consider the heavens, the work of Thine hands, the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained."

So seasons came again and again and melted into ascending years with proverbial sameness, and Paul reached the wonderful age of thirteen. It was a year of importance, for in Tarsus a youth of that age was expected to meditate seriously upon his life mission — the life calling. Paul had already mastered the laws of Moses, now he

faced daily the problem of walking strictly in the paths of their teaching. He would soon be of sufficient worthiness to be called a "son of God" in the synagogue.

He was examined in religious solemnity and declared trustworthy to have phylacteries bound upon his arm and brow in the synagogue. This, in a way, sealed his manhood before the rabbis. Phylacteries were carefully prepared. Four scriptural texts were written in Hebrew, with special ink, upon tiny pieces of parchment, and placed in a small box of black calfskin, to which were attached two straps of skin of about half an inch in width and long enough for fastening.

When this important day in Paul's thirteenth year arrived, he stood in the dim light of the synagogue, while a dignified grey-haired official placed a small black box upon his bare left arm and carefully twined two thongs seven times around his arm, gradually down and around his hand three times, then down to his middle finger, and tied them there in a secure knot. Henceforth he could never enter a synagogue for worship without first binding the phylacteries upon his arm. He would be privileged to wear one on his brow later if his obedience to the laws and traditions warranted.

During the synagogue ceremony, a mother sat back of the stone screen, her face pressed close to the lattice. Tears of gratitude glistened like jewels in her eyes. With her pride and happiness there was also a pang of regret, for Paul, her beloved son, would never again sit there with her back of the screen. He could now wear on his arm the sacred verses which read in part, "It shall be a sign unto thee upon thine eyes, that the law of God may be in thy mouth. Thou shalt diligently keep the commandments of God and His laws."

Paul's lessons in the synagogue school being concluded, he entered into complicated study courses assigned to college students. There was an ancient Jewish belief that a father who did not teach his son a trade wished him to become a thief. Although he was being instructed to become a rabbi and teacher, his father realized that it was a paternal duty to teach him his trade also. This training was begun by first teaching Paul the texture of cloth, its trade and valuations. Some of the cilicium materials were so hard that they appeared to be waterproof. He learned to make ship-sails, grain-sacks, rough garments for sailors and fishermen, and good strong tent-covers. The

open shed where Paul and his father worked held looms and other paraphernalia necessary for their business. The looms were of a primitive model which is to-day almost extinct. Tradesmen traveled some distance for the necessary raw materials. Twice a year Paul's father journeyed far up winding mountain paths to barter with shepherds, and purchase materials for weaving. His train of asses returned laden with sacks of hair for spinning into thread.

Dyes from berries and tree-bark were used to obtain lustrous shades of red, blue, purple, brown, yellow, and green. Shepherds preferred the tent-covers woven with bold, broad stripes. Modern color schemes displayed in awnings and umbrellas for seaside and garden use perhaps originated in that day when the first striped tenting nestled upon the shepherds' green hilltops.

Women were engaged to spin the hair. They blended bright colors artistically into harmonious ensembles, winding thread upon spindles with nimble fingers and putting the thread into the weaver's shuttle. Spinning had to be learned before the weaving, so Paul quietly stood by and watched this work for hours at a time. He soon gained a practical, thorough knowledge of the

trade. His parents firmly believed in correct, methodical beginnings in all things. They taught him that the greatness of building meant first, a right foundation.

Spinning was easy, Paul thought, but the weaving took more alertness and a certain dexterous knowledge. Being short of stature, Paul looked like a younger child as he stood, day after day, perfecting a beginner's work in his father's establishment, placing the web on the loom for various kinds of cloth, filling and threading a shuttle, throwing it from side to side and catching it before it fell to the ground, then pushing the heavy beam of wood and pressing the thread with patient care. For a youth who could repeat all the Old Testament books from memory, learning a simple weaving trade did not present much of a test.

He learned to do tedious work obediently. Then he finally learned to make a tent. Many long, weary hours tested the boy's patience while he labored with a large bronze needle and thick thread, sewing together pieces of heavy haircloth. Carefully the tent edges were united, that the driving rains and sweeping winds might not molest the tent-dweller who purchased his home from Paul's father. This trade experience developed patience,

and without rebellion he endured many severe needle pricks. Although he preferred a ball game out in the open, obedience prevailed. He learned what it meant to make dwellings for shepherds of the hills. The finished product of a tent resembled a large curtained square of striped carpet. The finishing touches included adjusting the hooks, loops, and poles provided for clothing, pots, pans, and harness. They were indeed "tents of the Arabs."

Jewish rabbis in Paul's day generally refused to accept recompense for their theological services. They observed the rule, "Use not the law as a spade to dig with" in their daily activities. Paul learned a trade in order to earn his livelihood, although his life was dedicated to teaching and preaching in the synagogue. At this time a learned schoolmaster, educated in Jerusalem in the numerous traditions, began his instructions, which alternated with his trade lessons in tent-weaving.

Then came the business of going out to fetch materials, to be followed by the art of selling. His first trip through the country as a buyer was in the spring of the year. His father accompanied him over the famous Roman road, which was paved with black stones and worn off in numerous places

by the constant grind of wagons, carts, and heavy chariot wheels. Vivid red and yellow poppies were then banked along the hillside, and white tulips graced the velvet meadows. The perfume of hyacinths wafted across their path. They planned to gather sprays of honeysuckle and white jasmine on the return trip, for the precious mother. This trip held more than delights along the way. There were dangers to be faced. They must traverse a steep pass called Cilician Gates, the narrow opening enabling travelers to reach the Cilician plain from over beyond. Invading soldiers had cut through the rock, and the gorge, at some points, was so narrow that a laden camel could scarcely pass beneath the overhanging crags. The shepherds' land lay at the very top of this pass. Shepherds and their families lived like wild, primitive beings. Children played with snarling dogs about the tent fires, which smouldered continuously with daily rubbish.

Paul learned the route and the manner required in bargaining. When they discovered the purchaser's mission, shepherds offered a pretense that they were unwilling to sell their sheep's wool. He learned, in this experience, the idiosyncrasies of mortals who buy and sell.

His practical training in selling cloth, journeying from one small coast town to another, followed. He sold clothing and ship-sails to sailors, and various miscellaneous wares to farmers and merchants. His dealings were with both rich and poor, merchants, sailors, farmers, townspeople, foreigners, and Jews. One day he discovered that foreigners had an antipathy for Jews, just as they, in turn, disliked foreigners.

At the age of sixteen he was permitted to rub elbows with the world, as a part of the education qualifying him for the duties of mature life. Until this time he had not known intimately of the seamy side of human existence. He now stopped in strange stone buildings, heard campfire stories about war, cheating, feasting, and bartering.

Paul's rabbinical future was discussed in his home. It was definitely decided that if he were to continue his pursuit of religious learning, it would be necessary for him to reside in Jerusalem, that he might study there with one of the great, learned rabbis. Scholarly friends assembled for this discussion with the family, and the future of Paul was debated upon in minute detail. Prominent men of Tarsus gave Paul many letters of

commendation to influential friends in Jerusalem, and further plans were formulated for his welfare.

The home of Paul's sister and her husband was in Jerusalem at this time. The parents anticipated accompanying him there, thus combining a visit to the golden temple and a sojourn with their daughter. They decided to travel leisurely by road with one of the Tarsus pilgrim bands which, at that time, was preparing for a journey to the golden temple. The other route, preferred by many, was by water to Caesarea, on the coast of Palestine.

Preparations for Paul's wardrobe meant laborious effort for the mother. His kit must contain only the best of everything. For weeks she made the finest shirts, tunics, shawls, kerchiefs, and girdles. She placed a luxurious sleeping-mat and a handsome new winter cloak within his traveling bundle. Bright-colored embroidery touched his garments; everything he possessed bespoke a lineage of prosperity. His money-bag held many glittering coins for use in Jerusalem.

One fine day, three well-groomed horses bore Paul and his prosperous parents out through the city gates toward Jerusalem. Humble asses laden with tents, mats, bottles, foods, clothing, and books followed along behind. The parents

joined in the psalms of rejoicing, because health and prosperity had blessed them and they were able to dedicate a son's life to God's service, according to the laws of Moses. Metaphorically, the road they traversed traced the pages of religious history with vital indelibility. Hundreds poured into the road in a perpetual stream, waving palms and chanting their songs to God. Merchants with awkwardly laden, rocking camels traveled there in summer and winter alike. They could be identified in the distance by the gaudy, bright purple girdles and shimmering metal-cloth turbans which they wore.

On and on over hills and valleys the human line moved past the sea, upturned like a bright mirror to the placid countenance of the sky. They crossed the bridge of the River Cydnus, passed over the Roman road, and entered the town of Adana as the first day's sun lowered.

The following morning the pilgrims took a hasty breakfast of eggs, thin scones, parched corn, and oil. Then tents were hoisted, and folded, and the train of human beings, with faithful animals following, again took up the inspired march. The road was ragged in spots, for travel in that direction had been heavy. Not only the Romans and

Greeks, but Syrians, Macedonians, and Persians traveled the famous highway between the east and west. Flashing armor of Roman soldiers glistened as they passed, dragging a chain of slaves along their bloodstained path. There were robbers hiding in hill caves along the way, who waited to pounce upon defenceless travelers and strip them of their wares and jewelry. Night travel was deemed unsafe because of wolves and hyenas. Tigers and lions often attacked travelers. The pilgrims believed that there was safety in numbers, so they traveled in groups.

On the fourth day of the pilgrimage they were at the end of the Mediterranean. Then they passed the majestic city of Antioch, the capital of Syria, upon the hill, well protected by massive walls.

Paul saw wonderful temples, theatres, and the white marble baths of the foreigners. The seaport of Seleucia was impressive with its thick array of moving ships. He noted that even more masts and flags were gathered there than in the river harbor at Tarsus.

They continued their travel along the winding road of the seashore from Antioch, and passed through Damascus and Palestine, a country familiar to them all, then to the fascinating wooded

land of Bashan, past the snowy cap of Hermon which rose like a fluffy cloud in the distance. They were happy to be in the country of their fathers. They paused on the land belonging to the tribe of Naphtali. Over the hills to the south was the promised land of Moses!

Paul saw the Lebanon ranges, spreading out from Mount Hermon with its mighty cedars referred to frequently in the Bible.

"He shall grow like a cedar of Lebanon;
The hills are covered with shadows,
And the boughs are goodly cedars
Sending branches into the sea and roots into the river.
The trees of God are full of sap,
The cedars of Lebanon which He planted;
There the birds make their nests,
The stork has her home in the branches."

The valley of the Jordan extended from Bashan to where the sparkling Lake Gennesaret appeared in the distance. The uneven shore of the lake was fringed with green grass, shrubbery, and trees, and fishing-boats dotted its blue waters. As they approached the Jordan, which they were to cross, Paul remembered the story of Joshua leading the children of Israel through the river and into the land of milk and honey. There was Mount Tabor

with its top covered with small oak-trees! Years before, Barak and Deborah had gathered there ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun and descended to defeat Sisera, the Canaanite, with his chariots of iron.

There was the broad plain of Esdraelon, with villages and fields of nodding grain, where battles were fought and won; the mountain of Gilboa where another Saul, the King, had placed his sword-handle upon the ground to pierce his heart with the blade of defeat. Bitterness between the Samaritans and Jews being intense, the pilgrims did not venture through the Samaritans' beautiful country, but remained on the safe side of the Jordan.

At a place just across the wide vale of Shechem, Jacob, on the way to his father, Isaac, at Hebron, stopped with his sons, for four years. It was the location of Jacob's well and Joseph's tomb.

The wooded vale of Jabbok was crossed, then the verdant pasture lands of Gilead, and the high spot was seen where Jacob wrestled all night with the enemy of falsity. The stony plain of Bethel seemed to turn memory's pages back to the story of Jacob and his dream of angels on the ladder

between heaven and earth. There Jacob had set up a stone — a symbolic promise to serve God all his life.

They bathed in the sacred waters of the Jordan, imbibing an inspiring, stimulating sense of baptism. They traveled on to picturesque Jericho and climbed the hills of Judea. It was a difficult, dangerous climb, but just beyond lay their beloved Jerusalem.

Paul first viewed Jerusalem, the golden, from the crest of a hill. Palaces, streets, towers, walls, and terraces were spread below. The Mount of Olives was not high, as mountains are judged, and soon the pilgrims were winding down into the Kedron valley. What could have been Paul's first thought as he beheld, for the first time, the temple foursquare?

Pouring processions appeared like threads below as they entered the sacred doors to the rhythmic waving of palms and chanting of songs of the Almighty.

"The joy of the whole earth is Mount Zion. Beautiful for situation. On the north side is the city of the great king," and changing the tempo, they continued, "Walk about Zion, go round about her. Count the towers, and mark the walls, con-

with its top covered with small oak-trees! Years before, Barak and Deborah had gathered there ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun and descended to defeat Sisera, the Canaanite, with his chariots of iron.

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sider the palaces and tell it to your children, for the Lord is our God for ever and ever."

Beyond the great rich temple curtains, mystery dwelt in the hushed presence of God!

Camps arose in every direction outside Jerusalem, for there were not accommodations within the gates for all the multitude. There was a happy family reunion with Paul's married sister and her husband. Family ties were strong and of traditional origin.

The sparkling stream of which King David said, "There is a river whose stream makes glad the city of God, the holy place of the tent of the Most High," flowed near the city gate. For many days, songs of marching pilgrims continued to echo from hilltop and valley as they entered.

"As the deer pants after the water brook, so thirsts my soul for Thee, O God. I went with the throng with songs of joy and praise, a multitude keeping holiday."

Blasts from the priests' silver trumpets proclaimed the birth of a new day in Jerusalem. Twenty men slowly moved back the massive gates and the morning sacrifice soon burned upon the great white altar of the priests' court. Marble tables were prepared for the sacrifices.

In the early morning Paul's bare feet paused upon the temple pavement of glorious colors, and he knelt near the wonderfully made pillars, with his eyes turned toward the roof of gold. Many white-robed priests of doctrinal authority moved about. A sign on the pillars read: "No foreigner may pass here on pain of death." If Paul had then been gifted with the spirit of prophecy, he would have known what future encounters awaited him there on that significant spot of the temple. The bath, or "seas," for the priests' use, was held by twelve brass lions. Grand steps of polished marble and gorgeous curtains held the gaze spell-bound.

Gifts of gold and silver rolled into the treasury. Gold dishes were offered by foreign princes. At the doors, there were boxes which had trumpet-shaped mouths, and these resounded with a perpetual dropping of coins as people entered the temple. Paul threw in his first temple-gift of money for the laws of Moses, and heard the coins drop through the trumpet mouth and on down into the golden pile of the treasury. Scholarly teachers spoke in groups and he moved about from group to group, for he wanted to hear many of them.

Finally the roseate hues of eventide again

painted the skies, and the massive gates creaked their message abroad that another day had gone, while the priests' trumpets rang down the curtain on another day of the sacred drama of Jerusalem. Arches and pillars echoed the whispering murmurs of nightfall.

Several days of sight-seeing and worship followed. Next Paul considered the problem of his permanent domicile in Jerusalem. He was to be a student within those golden walls! He was ambitious, and the contemplation of his chosen future life thrilled his youthful heart.

Gamaliel, a strict Pharisee, was chosen by the father to teach him. He was a man of profound learning and renowned as a rabbi. He was the son of Rabbi Simeon, and grandson of Rabbi Hillel, the most learned rabbi of early Jewish history, whose wisdom, kindness, and discernment made his name famous and beloved by all. It was generally believed that Gamaliel inherited those kindly traits. He often repeated to students words of wisdom which were of his grandfather's teaching. Jews well versed in Rabbi Hillel's doctrines could readily recognize such admonitions as, "What you yourself dislike, do not do to your neighbor, for this is the law, and everything

else is only the application." Another of his wise sayings was this: "He who knows the law has gained the life to come." Such lessons of the law were instilled into Paul's mind, and he received a clear Pharisaical interpretation of them. Later, through great tribulation he was to receive an enlightened interpretation of the law according to Christ Jesus.

He was much interested when he learned the life story of Rabbi Hillel, the founder of Gamaliel's teaching. As a little boy he was very poor, and one winter day he did not have the small coin required of little students for the schoolmaster. He would not return home, but climbed up to the window, which held no glass, so that he would not miss any of his teacher's words. Snow fell on the shivering little boy outside. Suddenly the teacher looked up toward the window, saw the little fellow, brought him in, and lovingly warmed him by the fire.

On Passover Eve Paul and his father took their snow-white sacrificial lamb to the temple for the priests' inspection. Thousands of helpless, bleating lambs were carried into the temple to bow beneath glittering knives, well sharpened for the occasion. This was a part of the sacrificial

ceremony, and a red stream flowed at the foot of the altar.

All that Passover night, stars winked and blinked down upon the temple slaughter. Slaying, burning, then feasting! Low temple lights tossed flickering shadows to and fro; smoking fires crackled, and the sacred incense of sacrificed animals permeated the air. There were vigorous duties to perform. Thousands of the Levites and servants cleansed the temple, washing pavements and removing stains of the festivities. Then followed the seven days of unleavened bread. The cakes which the Israelites partook of, when they fled out of Egypt, had no leaven because of the hurried making. Before eating this especially prepared bread in the golden temple of Jerusalem, the worshippers were compelled to cut off their hair and nails and to take a bath. Some objected to strict obedience to these rules.

Three days of buying and selling in the bazaars followed the bringing of grain into the temple for wave offering. There seemed little opportunity for spiritual worship in the seasonal orgies of display and material sacrifice. There were numerous programmes of thanksgiving singing. Voices rang clear and sonorous to the familiar lines:

"Sing aloud to God, our strength, and make a joyful noise,
Sing the psalm; strike the cymbal, harp, and psaltery.
Blow upon the trumpet to the new moon,
It is the law for Israel and a command of God."

Flickering candles danced mysteriously and altar fires sent fiery points heavenward, then paused for food of smouldering continuance. The youthful mind of Paul quaffed deeply of ritualistic impressions, and far within his being false creeds and doctrines took root.

The last day of the festival season was marked by melancholia, for Paul and his family were to separate, and bade each other adieu. The parents departed for their home in Tarsus, where there were others to be cared for and educated.

For a brief period Paul lived in the home of his sister in Jerusalem, and began to attend the classes of Gamaliel, which comprised both young and old students of the Bible who traveled from numerous distant ports for this instruction. Paul learned to ask questions — but he never doubted! Teachers frankly admitted that it was difficult to carry out all the rules of their religion; however, students were expected to be as obedient as possible.

At this time it was voiced about that many of

the teachers were "blind leaders of a blind people." Paul believed implicitly that a man's real and only happiness rested in keeping the laws and traditions of his people. Students were familiarized with civil crimes, such as theft and murder, of their penalties, and of all the various man-made offences against the law, and likewise their punishments.

An historian has suggested that Paul married, during his student days, a certain Nossis, who passed on two years later; but Paul left no definite information on this subject in his valuable epistles.

Daily the web of tradition was woven more securely about him and his daily life. There were prescribed ways of washing the hands, with a certain number of steps to the basin, and many other ridiculous rules for daily routine. Water used from pools, cisterns, and wells had particular significance. He learned that men who did not wash their hands after partaking of food, equaled murderers in offence. These ideas were as weeds in his garden of thought. There were rules of procedure governing the selection of foodstuffs. Some animals were forbidden as food, while others required special preparation before they passed

the censorship. Birds and fish were either accepted or banned according to rules. Pork was considered unclean, and persons who ate rare beef were surely to be put to death.

Paul was a strict Pharisee of Asia, and not of Jerusalem. He always wore a colorful, broad-striped, long tunic, belted at the waist, with a broad sash or shawl wound around his body twice, serving also as a pocket for numerous small articles that he carried about with him. On winter days he wore a cloak of thick brown material which protected him from the storms. Over this hung his prayer shawl. He wore a head-kerchief which was carefully folded to shade his face and was drawn about his head with a cord of gay hue.

He had an alert, steady glance and looked unlike many of the languid-eyed Jews that he met in the temple of Jerusalem. Vitality beamed in his countenance. His hair, black as a raven's wing, was brushed back with careful exactness.

Educational attainments elsewhere in the world became interesting to him. The Pharisees of Jerusalem were amusing to others of the townspeople. Small boys of the city nicknamed them "tumbling Pharisees." Their pretensions and attempts to bend low continuously often sent

them tumbling headfirst, causing the children along the streets to laugh and ridicule. Other worshippers were classified as "bleeding Pharisees" because they wandered about with their eyes closed lest they behold a woman who would contaminate their purity. Some of them bled their noses against posts and walls. The Pharisees who preferred not to gaze upon worldliness of any description were nicknamed "cap Pharisees." Others, known as the "What-can-I-do-more-Pharisees," boasted of their perfection, consequently no one took them seriously.

Paul did not assimilate all the inconsistencies of his people, but he acquired many of their vain habits and mannerisms. He considered it a religious duty to step aside on the street and draw his cloak about him lest his clothing touch another in passing. If the passer-by did not observe the law as he deemed wise, the slightest contact would prove detrimental. He thought it unnecessary to encourage women to seek the higher teaching. Women never influenced his life, and he regarded them as handicaps to spiritual progress.

He had dreamed of Mount Zion as a child, and now that he lived in Jerusalem, he could gaze afar out on the beauteous mountain daily. It

loomed up in stately dignity across the narrow Tyropean valley, which was spanned by a high bridge, designed to join both sides of the city and furnish an accessible road for the priests. The city of King David held many rich palaces and beautiful towers outlined by King Herod. He saw the three huge towers of massive squares of marble: one was called Hippicos, after Herod's friend, one Phasael, after his brother, and the third, Mariamne, after the wife that he killed after many years of cruel, inhuman torture. The palace which now served as the Roman governor's home was formerly Herod's own palace, and its gold and silver splendor still scintillated in the sunlight, and the jewels flashed with the lustre of permanence.

The huge fort, Antonia (named after Mark Antony), had a strong guard on duty at all hours. Beneath, there was a passageway leading to the temple, where foreigners could freely enter the inner shrine. Paul did not understand this matter. In the days to come, he would be conveyed through this same passageway by Romans who befriended him.

Paul took many trips to near-by towns to sell cloth. Sometimes he went out through the Damas-

cus Gate, along by the wonderful tombs in the hillside; occasionally he chose to go through the Jaffa Gate of the east side and along the road toward the Mediterranean Sea where many hated Romans marched from their ships. When his business led him southward, he departed by the Lion Gate at the dismal vale of Hinnom where Tophet, known as Gehenna, or Hell, smouldered with unending rubbish fires.

Rare natural beauty marked the road by the pool of Siloam, which bubbled up at the foot of the city wall, and glistened in a gentle stream through the king's gardens in the peaceful valley of Jehoshaphat. Silver willows and almond-trees flourished there, with dainty lilies adding a note of delicacy. Paul saw the hills of Hebron, where the flocks of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had pastured long, long years before. He paused at Rachel's tomb to pray. He heard many interesting stories about David, the shepherd king, who passionately loved music and song, and who enjoyed many conquests.

The east gate of the city was the most picturesque, because the swift, glistening waters of the Hebron sparkled through the valley, and Mount Olive ascended but a short distance away. The

miracle of perpetual verdure colored the slopes of Mount Olive.

Fragrant myrtles and olives, dark cypress, almond, and clustering waxlike vines could be found there all the year. Two cedar-trees stood at the top of this remarkable hill, like silent sentinels.

From the top of the mount, the grey rocks about the Dead Sea appeared in distinctive contrast to the soft green of the Jordan banks. Signals of the new moon were flashed with seasonal regularity. Great crowds of pilgrims began to move slowly back to their homes as the warm days of summertime blended into sombre autumn. City activities then settled down to regular routine again, and appalling quietude rested upon the religious quarters of the populace. July and August were burning months in Jerusalem, with never a drop of rain to relieve the earth. The earth ofttimes cracked in wide streaks, of sufficient size to hold a youth's foot. Lazy green and brown lizards basked in the scorching sun. So the days of fall were welcomed by the inhabitants of the city.

Fasting days were observed in memory of the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, the destruction of the first temple, and the death of

Gedaliah. Fasting on Mondays and Thursdays honored Moses and Mount Sinai. Paul confidently believed these communions would aid him to receive special messages from God in his dreams.

The Festival of Atonement convened in the golden brown days of October. Paul made special preparation for a week of devout supplication. He stood with other students, clad in white sheets, symbolizing sorrow. Later, he was held in seclusion in an inner room of the temple, that his purity might be unquestioned. All the long night preceding the ceremony, he was kept wide awake.

Just before dawn he was arrayed in a snow-white linen dress, and a dark blue cloak with rich border heavily embroidered with a scarlet flower design. Bells trimmed his clothing, and tinkled faintly as he walked. This attire was completed by an elaborate stiff blouse which was clasped with precious jewels bearing the names of the twelve tribes of the Jews. He wore a breastplate made of gems, and upon his white bell-shaped hat with tie of blue ribbons he wore a gold plate with the inscription: "Holiness to the Lord." The priests wore skirts with bells upon them which jingled as they prepared the Atonement Day sacrifice service for Paul and the other worshippers.

Two white goats stood trembling with fright before them; one had a red flannel band around its neck, and the other had the red band tied upon its horn. The first was killed for the blood of sacrifice, but the second, the scapegoat, was taken out by a chosen official, according to custom, and released. After the sinful little animal, burdened with so many sins, reached the five-mile limit, he was set free in the wilderness. During this outside action, worshippers in the temple muttered to each other in strange solemnity, "The goat has borne away all our transgressions into an uninhabited land."

When the evening following the ceremony came, Paul felt hungry. He had not tasted food for many hours. After his feast, he went out into the vineyard gardens where maidens of the city danced in the bright moonlight. Maidens who desired marriage dressed in white garments which were presented to them as gifts for the event. Rich and poor maidens were attired alike, which afforded equality of opportunity. They danced to music of timbrels and chanted alluring songs of romance. Young men dressed in their best clothes watched the dancing figures float past them in the moonlight.

Marriage laws were set down for Jews to observe. Jews were to marry Jews. A man having several wives was privileged to send a wife away if she went about their home with hair unbound or served poorly cooked food to him. Paul learned that the presence of a wife would lead his attention away from his consecrated, religious study, and keep thought away from strict observance of the spiritual laws and traditions. At that time Pharisees used harsh treatment with wives, and their methods were later to be rebuked, and severity replaced by love and tenderness.

When Paul learned that a new Messiah was expected on earth, according to divine prophecy, he visualized Him as a great human prince who would use authoritative divine power to drive out all the Jews' enemies from before their eyes. Pomp and display stimulated Paul's mind. His religious perspective gradually converged into a groove of narrowness, symbolized by the narrow thoroughfare of a Jewish settlement, from which no one digressed. As years went by, he made occasional visits to his home in Tarsus, where his proud parents gloried in their son's progress, and in his acknowledged superiority.

CHAPTER IV

LIGHT — AND DARKNESS

MUCH discord arose in Jerusalem because Pontius Pilate looked upon Jews as Roman slaves. He commanded that golden shields be made, engraved, and hung upon the walls of the palace of Herod, where Pilate now resided as governor. The shields were made in honor of the Emperor Tiberius, whom he was anxious to please. Excited crowds besought him to remove the shields, which appeared to be an altar of idolatry to the man, Tiberius. Roman soldiers guarded the shining golden shields for many days. Antipas, son of Herod, was a favorite of Tiberius, and when he reported the anger of the whole Jewish nation, the Emperor advised the removal of the emblems, and suggested that they might be safely hung in the stronghold at Caesarea, if Pilate so desired. In any event, he continued to insist that the emblems must not remain in the palace to enrage the Jews further. There was much rejoicing among the Jews when this mandate was enforced, because they considered it a victory for them.

Pilate observed that the canal, which supplied the city with water, was old and broken. A new waterway was needed, and he asked that some of the temple funds be used for the project. The Jews refused, and rebelled against using sacred money for such a purpose. Pilate's plan was progressive and right, so, with the support of the whole force of his Roman soldiers, he demanded that the Jewish leaders accept this improvement for their country. He forced the issue; their decision had to be in the affirmative. Repairing and building began on a great watercourse which extended miles and miles through hills and valleys. In that age it was considered a masterpiece of construction.

At the time, this achievement was not generally appreciated, and Paul often heard the Jews discuss it disdainfully. Paul may have beheld the accident recorded, when a stone tower near the pool of Siloam fell and killed several workmen. The rabbis explained to their parishioners that it occurred as a punishment because they had used temple money for the building. They did not explain why the entire structure was not destroyed by divine wrath.

The iron hand of Rome lay firmly upon the

throat of Jerusalem. It was blasphemy to speak in any manner against the teaching of Moses which meant, in the original, "to speak against God." The penalty for such a crime was death by stoning. Paul accepted unreservedly all that the rabbis taught. He was always ready to carry out their cruel rules with an eager hand. At the end of ten years' study at the feet of his beloved teacher, Gamaliel, Paul became intolerant and hateful with all who disagreed with his beliefs. But a Jewish mother's dream had been fulfilled, for he was indeed learned in the laws and tradition of Moses; he was a leader, an authority!

The fame of John the Baptist spread throughout the land. He was a cousin of Jesus, the son of a chief high priest, and a young man of purity and ambition, consecrated to interpret religious truths to others. He began to take his place at the ford of the River Jordan where pilgrims passed by. He chose a high spot, and beckoned the people to come and be baptized in the holy waters of the Jordan, to confess their sins, and to make ready for the coming of the holy man of God. His action seemed strange to them, and they questioned him. He always replied with the inspired words: "I baptize thee with water, but One mightier than I cometh,

the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose. He shall baptize thee with the Holy Spirit."

His deep sincerity impressed his listeners. Some became his followers. He was well known among them and highly respected. He expressed many truths he had learned in the temple where Paul was taught. John possessed superior spiritual vision. With his illumined consciousness, he foretold the coming of the Saviour. He was gentle, kind, and humble. He spoke against no one, so the Romans could not take offence at his words of prophecy. With his understanding of spiritual things, he was endowed with the confidence which enforces the unseen law. When Jesus of Nazareth heard about his cousin John, he was peculiarly stirred. He bent over his last day's work at his carpentry bench in his father's shed at Nazareth. The light of spirit illumined his thoughts. How gently he emerged into the world to lead mankind into spiritual life! In humility he walked to show the way.

John's eyes peered heavenward for a visible appearing of the Saviour of mankind. But it was a slight rustle of the sawdust and shavings within his humble shop which marked the earthly steps of One Divine. With the quietness of falling dew upon the petals of the flowers, he came to walk

among the men of flesh. He came unadorned with worldly pomp and fashion, but wore a simple peasant's tunic of white. Plain sandals were upon his feet, and in his hand he carried a staff.

The village carpenter departed — and our blessed Saviour appeared, with countenance shining as the sun. And the fire of his sacred mission blazed within his tender heart. He slowly approached John and his listeners by the River Jordan. There was no spectacular appearance of a worldly prince, but he came in meekness and gentleness. When John gazed into his face, he realized the truth. He exclaimed, "There standest One among you whom ye know not: He it is, who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose." And John bare record, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him." "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." John baptized Jesus as he requested, and in that hour he heard a voice saying, "Thou art my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased."

John's followers would not believe that Jesus Christ was the Saviour of mankind, for there was no material evidence to convince them of the

fact. They smiled among themselves when John preached of the Son of God who tarried a brief while in their midst. There was something about the living, ever present God they could not understand. The inspired mind of John received the assurance that Jesus was the chosen one. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth."

Jesus preached about the living God through the remote hamlets, in temple and countryside. Many times the priests stopped his preaching, calling it blasphemy against the laws of Moses. They contended that for a human being to liken himself to God on high was great impertinence. But on and on he trudged with his divine message, "God is a spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." "The son can do nothing of himself but what he seeth the Father do. My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me."

The first year of Jesus' divine apostleship gave to the world the sacred Sermon on the Mount.

Paul never heard Jesus preach, but he was informed of his healing and teaching. The rabbis

taught that an ignorant peasant could have no influence nor effect upon their religion, which was based upon profound learning and scholastic authority. Jesus boldly rebuked their numerous foolish creeds. Marriage and divorce were given a new interpretation. He brought praise to little children ("Suffer the little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven"). Purity and innocence he declared to be every man's necessity, thereby opening the door of receptivity for divine blessings of God to enter. These teachings inflamed the hatred of the Jews. At this time Paul was not ready to touch the hem of Christ's garment in humility. He did not understand John's devotion to Jesus' teachings. John was the son of a priest in their own temple and was respected for his purity of thought.

Stories of the healing work of Jesus came more frequently to Paul as time passed, and he decided to remain staunch and loyal to his own religion, helping in any way possible to dethrone the newcomer from the place he usurped. The Nazarenes formed a sect which was joined by many of the Jerusalem Jews. Synagogue scribes and rabbis scoffed at the "fishermen disciples" of Jesus. Gamaliel's attitude was one of kindness, however,

and he besought his people to desist from the persecution of the Nazarenes, wisely stating that if their teaching did not prove to be the truth, it would come to naught and could harm no one.

Furthermore, he insisted, if the preaching were ordained of God, it could not be overthrown by their own feeble efforts. Paul did not agree with his teacher, for it seemed illogical to him that ignorant fishermen could teach others about God — or anything else. He broke away from his teacher at this time, and joined the most venomous persecutors of Jesus' followers who entered Jerusalem.

Their aim was to stamp out Christianity. Paul was a self-righteous Pharisee of the inevitable traditional mold which began in the cradle days when a devout mother breathed creeds and doctrines into his child-life. Can the world question why he opposed the truth he could not recognize? His very blood flowed in veins of tradition. He was faithful to his ideal of obedience. With the facts of his life spread out before modern gaze, we may understand and pity the life so encumbered by the heaviness of Pharisaism. There were sad lessons ahead, beyond the golden temple of Jerusalem! Pitiful struggles of the flesh, of which neither intuition nor prophecy had given the slightest hint

or warning, awaited him. His natural vision was dimmed by doctrinal mist.

The Nazarenes strengthened in power and numbers. There was much poverty among their people in Jerusalem. Stephen was appointed, among seven followers, to visit the city and give relief to those in distress. He was a leader in the firing-line for Christ Jesus, and a target for human thrusts of hatred and malice.

Paul delivered a heated address to convince the Jews of the temple that the Nazarenes were guilty of crime and blasphemous intrusion. At that time, even the recent condemnation of Jesus, his death and resurrection did not furnish adequate proof to the cruel-hearted Pharisees. Stephen spoke before the throng about the revelations of the risen Master. An illumination brightened his handsome, sensitive face. Paul had met Stephen in debate in the synagogue of Cilicia upon one occasion. When they met in Jerusalem it was in the court of the seventy Sanhedrinists (judges), who were merciless in their persecution of the Nazarenes. Stephen was openly accused of going from house to house influencing converts and working against the laws of Moses in his teachings.

It was a tragic moment for Stephen when he

stood before the critical gaze of the Sanhedrinists. There in the assembly sat pale Caiaphas and his crude father-in-law, "the wolf-eyed Ananias" (who condemned Jesus), Theophilus and Matthew, the sons of Caiaphas. Gamaliel was present, and somewhat disapproved of the methods of his austere pupil, Paul. When the high priest questioned Stephen, he replied simply that he was not a blasphemer. The angelic light upon his face was recorded, as were his words of divine wisdom and inspiration, which were uttered in cultured Greek. Words that were never to be forgotten by mankind! "God dwelleth not in temples made with hands. Heaven is His throne, earth His footstool! What house will ye build me? saith the Lord; or what is the place of my rest? Hath He not made all things?" Angry faces scowled as he spoke with fervor and power. "You are obstinate and unjust, you are resisting the power of God as your fathers did before you. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted, and they have slain them which told of the coming of the Just One, of whom you have been now the betrayers and murderers; who have received the law as if it had been by the disposition of angels of Mount Sinai and have not kept it."

Enraged voices murmured in rumbling undertone throughout the vast audience. Stephen turned his face heavenward as if beholding a vision opening before him. "I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." After a sudden mysterious hush, cries of "Blasphemy!" rang forth; there were some who stopped their ears that no more of Stephen's words might be heard.

Their ears were too dull and their eyes too blind, because bigotry and arrogance reigned in their Court of Justice. Louder the shrieks of "Blasphemy!" rent the air.

Frenzied, mad hands cuffed the saintly Stephen right and left. The judges soon sentenced Stephen without any further parley. Paul denounced him in the harshest manner.

The sentence read, "Let him be stoned to death until he die according to the law." Stephen's face never changed its calm expression. His faith soared above injustice, like a white dove which never touches the mud of earth in its flight.

Paul laid aside his cloak hastily that it might not be stolen by some prowler, then with his associates he cast the first stones that were to kill Stephen the apostle, beloved of the Father.

out to persecute the Nazarenes, he bore all the authority of religious letters with a sternness almost steel-like in its propensity.

He held officially sealed dispatches on his person for this important commission. Strange thoughts, like silent soldiers, accompanied him as he rode. Unrest stirred within him, for his religion had seemed to give him no solace nor permanent peace. He entered green Galilee, the home of the gentle Jesus. Every child, every tree, and every living thing there knew the touch of Christ Jesus — the touch of restoration and healing! When the blue waters of Gennesaret flashed into view, Paul did not perceive there a "smile of the great spirit."

He was perplexed about the man Jesus, who rose up from obscurity and reigned royally as Prince of the Earth above all others. What of his own study and learning? What could it amount to, if this were really true of one uninstructed? A still, small voice suggested to him: "You are fighting against God"; but he was obstinate, and silenced the plea with, "I am fighting for God." Confusion over this subject angered him, for he believed that he had learned all that priests of earth may know. He wondered who could usurp a throne on High but a person of profound learning!

The journey to Damascus was almost ended, and the grey houses of the city rose in the distance. Word traveled like wildfire among all the people that the chief persecutor was on his way to take leading Nazarenes into custody as prisoners. It was an alarming time for the Nazarenes. They prayed steadfastly with assurance for their protection from harm.

It was the noon hour, and the day was hot. The horses dragged their feet slowly. Paul's train of soldiers rested and stretched out a bit in the shade of the trees outskirting the city, before preparing to resume the journey. But Paul lay prostrate and — blind! He groped strangely as a great Light blazed across the spot where he was stricken. He rubbed his eyes, but without avail, for his sight was completely gone. He was blind! Terror possessed him as he heard a voice ring out as if from God himself: "Saul! Saul!" He listened intently, then plainly the words rang into his consciousness: "'Why persecutest thou me?' And he said, 'Who art thou, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.' And he, trembling and astonished, said, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' And the Lord said unto

him, 'Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.' And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. They led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus." Peculiar thoughts surged in a regenerating upheaval within Paul.

The closeness to God, his life's one ambition, came at last when his searching mind turned to Christ Jesus. With blindness came Light! Thoughts of his past acts of persecution tortured his conscience. He had been deaf, but now he could hear! He heard the divine message: "For this have I appeared to you to make you minister and a witness both of what you have seen and of what I will make known to you; delivering you from the people and from foreigners to whom I shall send you to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to the Light, and from evil to God, that they may receive forgiveness of their sins, and a place among them that are made pure by faith in me." Thus the bewildered feet of Paul, the apostle, were driven into the ways of righteousness, and his sense of obedience, purified with humility and gentleness.

News of Paul's experience en route to Damascus

spread rapidly. "He journeyed into their country to imprison their countrymen, and had been stricken blind outside of the city gates and could do nothing." He was helped to the home of Judas in Straight Street. Memories played upon the harpstrings of his mind as he faced the dawn of a new day.

CHAPTER V

SIGHT TO THE BLIND

AMONG the Nazarenes of Damascus lived Ananias, who, like Paul, had been a strict Jew in his youth. He was very much concerned when he heard of Paul's experience. He had a vision in which the Lord spoke to him. He answered, "'Behold, I am here, Lord,' and the voice continued to instruct him, 'Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hands on him that he might receive his sight.'" Ananias told him, "How much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem. But the Lord said unto him, 'Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.' And Ananias went his way." He found Paul in the depths of remorse and humility, and completely without his eyesight. Ananias offered prayer with

the love which heals, and Paul was healed instantaneously. Genuine gratitude flooded his heart, and he tenderly laid his hand in true brotherly spirit upon the shoulder of his friend Ananias.

Ananias responded, "Thou shalt be a witness for Jesus to all men of what you have seen and heard. Obey the call of Jesus. Rise from the couch of death into a new life; repentance is forgiveness, water is the sign of purification and renewal." Thus Paul was reborn, and from the barren soil of selfish creeds rose blossoms of the true attributes of God.

Ananias departed after assuring him that "The Lord hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. He received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." Paul knew in his heart that to be appointed of God meant to hold high the torch of the white light of Christ. He became a new man. Intolerance was dispelled by love.

He bade farewell to the Nazarenes of Damascus, and went to Arabia to live in solitude, that he might draw nearer in daily living to the new-found God of Love, Truth, and Life.

When the soldiers of Jerusalem returned without Paul, they carried a remarkable letter telling of

his conversion, and of his final departure from the ranks as their rabbi and teacher. Gradually all his vast knowledge of the letter of the Bible received a glorious new interpretation. A different consecration replaced his former religious efforts. Step by step he experienced the renewal of divine adoption.

The world has never known a greater human life change than that of Paul, a Jew, who became the appointed apostle, divinely directed to lead Gentiles into the understanding of Life Everlasting. Being an eloquent and learned speaker, he began to preach to the people. He told them of his conversion and of the blindness which was replaced with the Sight of God.

In Damascus, enemies soon plotted to kill Paul because of his teachings of freedom. A friend confided the hateful scheme to him while others planned to thwart the assassins. When night came they lowered him from a window in a huge basket. Being small of stature he escaped easily, and through the still darkness of the night the hurrying figure in a brown cloak fled to safety. He traveled back to Jerusalem and into the temple where he had persecuted and tortured the martyr, Stephen. He now listened eagerly to stories of

Jesus' life told him by his followers. It was a day of much importance when Paul met James, the brother of Jesus (who became a follower of His teachings after His ascension). James was then a leader in the Nazarene church of Jerusalem. It was difficult for James to relinquish all the old beliefs of his people. Creeds seemed to cling persistently. Therefore Paul and James could not always agree upon the practice of their religion. Paul spoke in the temple of Jerusalem teaching that Jesus was indeed the Saviour of the world. He related his experience on the Damascus road. The citizens remembered him as a strict Pharisee and persecutor of Jesus; they resented his change bitterly. Their opposition led to noisy jeering.

Paul was then warned secretly that the people planned the same treatment for him that had been given to Stephen. So again he crept away, disguised in such a way that he would not be apprehended. He was resolved to carry out the Master's admonition: "Go ye into all the world, preach the gospel, heal the sick." The instruction to "heal the sick" impressed him deeply, because such works offered proof or demonstration of the presence of God. In "the golden city of his dreams" he was rejected as a Christian convert.

His old companions and friends ridiculed the change in him. He stood alone with God! In that hour of advancement for him, he courageously took up his cross, for he knew there could be no crown without it. Man's inadequacy lay bare before him, and God's entirety appeared!

Nazarene friends accompanied him to Caesarea, a seaport which Paul particularly liked. They waited there patiently for a boat, and when it finally appeared, it was a trading vessel laden with corn from Egypt, bound for Tarsus. They boarded the ship.

Upon his arrival in Tarsus he was summoned to appear in the synagogue for a rebuke regarding his actions and apparent disloyalty to the faith of his fathers. It is there he may have endured the whippings to which he referred when he said that "he gloried in the experience and opportunity to suffer for the cause of the risen Christ." Many who listened to him there became converts and followed faithfully according to his teachings. He then preached throughout the province of Cilicia and also in Amana, the next province of Syria beyond the mountain. He became a familiar figure on the highways, riding upon an ass, or walking with a long staff which he had cut from a tree.

In this year of Roman history the young emperor, nicknamed Caligula, literally, "Little Boot," was drunk with power and false ambition. During his unwise reign he had images of himself made for the people to worship in all the empire's temples.

The Jews would not abide by this order to have images placed within their own temple. Caligula was enraged when the Jews refused to pay him homage. He then ordered Petronius, the Roman Governor of Syria, to have a high brass image of him cast, and then placed in the Jews' temple by force. Petronius hated such an assignment but acquiesced, telling the brass-founders not to rush the work, but to take it very leisurely. The Jews insisted that the image should not be placed in their temple, and if it were, it would be only over their dead bodies.

This developed into a contention which brought forth the distinctive characteristics of both races. Caligula became impatient with Petronius' slow, deliberate methods, and demanded that the work be hastened lest Petronius be beheaded (a method often used, for heads were of little consequence to Caligula).

At the time when Paul turned to the sunlight of

spirit, one of the darkest periods in the history of the Roman Empire made a stain across the pages of time. Slaughter, bloodshed, and rebellion threatened all Jerusalem. After three years of preparation, the image ordered by the emperor was not forthcoming. The strain of the demand ended, for the emperor died. Wantonness dominated Rome with a carnal grip, but it was not yet at its lowest depths of degradation. Idolatry existed in every land, and the serpent of lust mesmerized the citizenry into all the vices known to mortal man. Rumors of this condition reached Paul from time to time.

It was not so difficult for Paul and Philip to cast aside the various old rules regarding certain foodstuffs, as it proved to be for Peter.

Cornelius sent a dispatch to Peter requesting that he pay him a visit. He was a Roman soldier of Italian birth, but Peter set aside former prejudices regarding foreigners, and accepted his invitation. He spoke to Cornelius of Christianity in persuasive language. "I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him." As a result of this instruction Cornelius and his entire family were baptized as

Nazarenes. There were Nazarenes who objected to this because they believed that "the mark of the Jews" should be required first, before baptism as a Nazarene. "But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them, saying, 'I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, a certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me: upon the which when I fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And I heard a voice saying unto me, "Arise, Peter; slay and eat. What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.'" And they were convinced that Jesus intended his teachings for all mankind, regardless of creed, race, or color.

Barnabas was an earnest Nazarene, working among men at Antioch. He needed Paul of Tarsus to preach in the church there, so he set out to find him. "And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." (*Acts 11: 26*)

Just at the time when Paul established mighty works in Antioch, the emperor, Claudius, with glittering helmet and purple robe, entered England to rule over the country with his "Roman Eagles."

Beautiful Antioch was located on the banks of the Orontes River. Famous works of art decorated the palaces and gardens. A huge marble statue of Apollo, which stood majestically in the groves of Daphne, marked the center of pagan feasts and wild orgies.

Traders from every foreign port visited Antioch, the capital of Syria, daily, except during the stormy season when danger attended all sea travel. Among the Nazarenes of Antioch were Simeon the Black, from Africa, Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, a relative of Herod Antipas, the Jewish prince.

Paul and Barnabas worked faithfully and patiently together, teaching simple lessons and demonstrating the divine power that heals, by casting out disease. They expressed the power of at-one-ment with God. Word reached them of severe suffering of the Nazarene Jews in Jerusalem. They were being persecuted and lacked the mere necessities of existence. Paul's practical Christianity asserted itself, and he urged his brethren to remember the needs of their fellow workers.

Funds were essential to spread the gospel and give workers proper sustenance.

Paul earned his own livelihood by means of his trade, but Peter and his wife accepted remuneration for church services. Their missionary activities carried them far and near, and many of their stops were too brief to engage in business pursuits.

The subject of money was one the sensitive Paul evaded. He was sensitive regarding it when in any way it affected his own apostolic efforts. He wished to give to his followers no impression by which the purpose of his sacred calling could ever be misinterpreted. When he departed for Jerusalem, he took Titus, a young Greek, with him. The state of poverty in Jerusalem was serious, and the lamentable fact became known far abroad. Queen Helena of Adiabene, in Asia, heard of the dreadful famine. She purchased great quantities of corn from Egypt and figs from Cyprus, adding various other loads of foodstuffs for distribution among the poor of Jerusalem. Titus was a receptive new student and gained much from his association with Paul on this Jerusalem trip.

Paul's teaching among the people of Jerusalem was then prohibited, due to his change of faith.

He prayed fervently for guidance at this trying time, and received this divine command: "Depart. I will send you far hence to foreigners." After this prayerful communion with the Father he told his associates of God's command and his decision to obey. Leading Christians of the city met in the house of Mary, sister of Barnabas, whose son Mark was invited to join Paul's active workers.

Paul was absent from his followers in Antioch for one year. When he returned he related many touching messages of gratitude from sufferers in Jerusalem. There was rejoicing that the deadly cries from the jaws of famine had been silenced with plenty. In his preaching in Antioch he particularly accentuated the figure of speech used by Jesus: "I am the bread of life that came down from heaven — not the manna, of which those who ate were long since dead, but the bread which gives eternal life." The idea of eating was a metaphor for receiving spiritual benefit. In Ecclesiastes, allusion made to food and drink meant study of the law and the practice of good works.

Abiding symbols of the Last Supper were dwelt upon specifically in Paul's preaching. "As human nature requires daily sustenance, so the spiritual

nature which is contained in the life of man needs daily spiritual nurture. Growth of the measure of the fullness of Christ demands as imperatively the renewing of that spiritual food. The heavenly food in the wilderness and the ever-flowing rock which accompanied the wanderers in the desert are manifestations of the same spiritual power of the divine mind."

Thus Paul gave to the world a clear sense of God as a being of infinite love and wisdom. He advised his followers to avoid unnecessary suffering, and adhere strictly to God's law in obedience. He taught that a great sacrifice in materiality must precede spiritual advancement. "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." He admitted that the desires of the flesh seemed as a carnal law, forever warring against the law of spirit, which means freedom and dominion within. Paul was faithful to his ideals and the high calling of Christ Jesus.

CHAPTER VI

PERPLEXITIES — AND PURPOSE

In his own individual experience Paul had persistent problems of hereditary tendencies to meet, and he was often perplexed, as all mortals are at times. He discerned weak traits of character to be falsities of the dream existence; and he knew man to be divinely authorized to rebuke and destroy all such errors, which render him unlike the perfect one.

He learned patience with his associates. Peter was at times rash, then again timid. The fisherman disciple sincerely tried to obey Jesus' teachings from the day that he confessed to him, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Jesus understood that he glimpsed somewhat of the truth and he answered, "And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, which means rock, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Early training and uncertain allegiances were handicaps to Peter, for he impetuously wavered at

times. Paul saw that right motives and self-immolation would ultimately govern Peter's work and erase his wavering, but it was indeed a solution of time.

Pagan Antioch was dissolute, and in Corinth and Paphos at this period sex indulgences were regarded by a cult as an act of worship, consequently they were advocated generally, and licentious idolatry became the materialists' creed.

Paul taught continuously that "only the pure in heart can see God." The nature worship of the ancient Greek, Roman, and Syrian was similar to carnivals of lust of all ages and people.

In that first era of darkest pagan practices, deep-rooted Christianity laid its church foundations firmly, and they were destined to endure. The pure, white blossom of Christian deliverance sprang from the mire of debauchery. Christianity began its brilliant lighting, and harmonies of peace sang in the hearts of good men.

Paul's mission was as a bright lantern held aloft in the abject darkness of pagan night — the darkest era of the world's history! When the rays of awakening penetrated in a slight degree, right building began upon the earth. He taught that man was the architect of his own spiritual selfhood

and master of eternality. Elysium, garden of divine delights, depicted eternality of the land of promise.

The mesmeric mist of sense was dense, and Antioch did not respond generally to the voice of Christianity; however, Paul, the Jew of Tarsus, and Barnabas, the Jew of Cyprus, gave much of glorified, spiritualized thinking to the people there. With Mark they traveled to Cyprus to take up their work. As they entered the harbor of Salamis, at the mouth of the River Pediceus, they beheld the blue and white-capped mountains rising from a cluster of wild hill-ruggedness, and a futuristic black and white beach below.

In Cyprus Paul recognized the same kind of riotous living which existed at Antioch and Tarsus. Apollo, the idol of the sun, was worshipped in Antioch, while Venus, the idol of lovely womanhood, reigned at Cyprus. The priests created a story about Venus which the gullible citizens actually believed. Venus was thought to have risen from the foaming blue waves and landed upon the white sandy beach of an island where she made her home ever afterward. For that reason (according to superstitious beliefs), their women were so beautiful, tall, and graceful. This

story had no abiding place in Paul's thought, for superstition and logic could not dwell together.

Paul and Barnabas took many short trips to remote villages out of Salamis. They stopped at metal ore and salt mines, quarries, factories, and village squares. Frequently they spent the night in a miner's hut or in the bark tents of some shepherd. Again, they rested beneath the sky canopy dotted with a million stars, flickering like petulant fireflies above.

The city of Paphos was unlike Salamis. It attracted many pleasure-seekers and wasters. Fashionable women were carried through the streets daily on gaudy couches. Their coiffures were carefully hennaed a bright orange color, and their dark eyes heavily shadowed with black cosmetic.

Sergius Paulus was the Roman Governor of Cyprus. He was a man of culture, and was interested in progressive activities abroad, as well as at home. Elymas, a star-worshipper, greatly amused him because of his claims to magical skill. When the governor heard of the preaching of Paul and Barnabas, he sent for them to come before him. He may have considered that a debate between Paul and Elymas would prove highly entertaining. He possessed a certain pride of mind.

Paul and Barnabas entered the palace. Mark accompanied them. The governor reclined upon his low couch and scrutinized the guests as they meekly crossed the colored tiled floors with their naked feet. The wife of Paulus reclined in a robe of clinging rose silk.

Sergius Paulus was sincerely gratified to meet Paul, a Roman citizen of Tarsus and a scholar of Jerusalem. His identification carried a degree of prestige with the governor. There were also guests present to hear Paul speak.

The listeners were attentive as he spoke, and the governor "desired to hear the word of God." A meeting was later arranged for Paul to meet Elymas in debate. The magician was crafty, and used superstitious ramblings, taunts, and lies to arouse Paul's anger. Impetuously Paul burst forth in merited rebuke: "'O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? . . . behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season.' And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some one to lead him by the hand."

Sergius Paulus arose from his couch and, with deep feeling exclaimed, "I do believe in Jesus!" And when he returned to Rome he spoke of the wondrous teachings of the apostle Paul. Because of this sympathetic interest, the Nazarenes were assured of a comfortable sojourn in Cyprus.

Ten years passed, and gradually Paul's vision grew more clarified. His power for good could not be denied. With Barnabas, Mark, and several friends he set sail in an open boat, which they had engaged for the trip, to journey to the coast of Pamphylia. The boat was a coasting-vessel with one tall mast. The bow was partially decked and covered, to serve as a shelter from the sun during the day, and as a sleeping-place at night. After a few days at sea, they approached Perga with its noted race-course, and the white temple of Diana, huntress of the silver bow. Important wharves for foreign trade were located there. The weary travelers immediately found living-quarters in the Jewish settlement of the town. Because of the intense heat, Paul did not tarry long there but went up into the mountains. While there he wrote of robbers and wild beasts and narrow escapes. Mark, nephew of Barnabas, was not

impressed with the district or the possibilities it presented, so he set sail at once for Caesarea.

Unlike Barnabas, the strong and handsome Levite, Paul suffered exhaustion and frequent illnesses. The strain of travel and numerous heartaches, resultant from his mission, caused much discomfort. He rode slowly up slippery, rocky paths, and through numerous scorching valleys, and cold, rapid streams. When they came to Neapolis, their next stop-over, he entered the synagogue with its dim light, and addressed the people.

"And the next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming." So the tall figure of Barnabas and the short one of Paul were seen hurrying from the temple by forceful request. The rabbis then influenced women of the town whose husbands were prominent, to have the teachers officially banished from the city. The plan materialized, and the two men were driven from the city gates, lashed by birch rods and left with bruised, bleeding backs. As they paused outside the gates Paul untied his stout

shoes and shook well the grains of dust of Neapolis from them. But "the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region."

They visited Iconium, a Roman garrison, walled securely with two miles of stone wall. The city nestled in gardens of fluffy blossoms and fruit-trees. The province was well protected from all invaders and lawlessness, but near Iconium lurked bandits who thrived on stolen bags of shekels taken from Jews who traveled unprotected to Jerusalem.

Paul and Barnabas took up their weaving business, which they always synchronized with their church duties. There, as before, harmony reigned temporarily; then rebellion and resentment arose among them.

"The multitude of the city was divided, and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles." The Jews disliked to see men of both high and low degree flowing freely into the circle of Nazarene worshippers. Paul gave the people definite instruction in the words of the blessed Master, "For the whole Jewish law is contained in these words: Thou shalt love they neighbor as thyself, but if like wild animals ye begin to tear each other, take care lest you all be destroyed

together." Then the Jews planned to stone Paul and Barnabas and drive them from the city; but the two were protected by a warning, and fled before harm could befall them. Again the weavers' looms must be set up in another city! The Greek city of Lystra was the next city visited. It was surrounded by country covered with grazing buffalo herds, and in the salt marshes hundreds of black wild asses thrived. The city was a stronghold for Roman soldiers, and opposition awaited the apostles there. Paul spoke to the people at bazaars and in market places, beseeching them to turn to God.

A miracle was wrought there by Paul, which impressed the people more than preaching could do. A lame man, "impotent in his feet . . . who never had walked," sat among the listeners and was bidden by Paul, "'Stand upright on thy feet,' and he leaped and walked" — much to the astonishment of all.

Superstition governed the daily life of most of the citizens of Lystra. They believed in the story of Jupiter and Mercury, two imaginary gods who were supposed to have visited the country years before and wrought many strange wonders. So when they beheld a miracle performed at the hands

of Paul they shouted, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men." Paul protested vigorously but to no avail. They believed Jupiter to be a very handsome being to gaze upon, while Mercury was accredited with a magic tongue. Thus they placed Barnabas as Jupiter, and Paul as Mercury. The two apostles were unaware of the emotional turmoil, and meekly returned to their humble abode. They never suspected the antics that were at that moment being planned by the populace.

The priests were enthusiastic and ordered that a great ceremony be prepared for these two gods. They commanded two huge bulls to be brought forth, brushed, and oiled for sacrificial services. Ropes of red roses were twined about the bodies of the animals. A long procession of fanatics marched with solemnity to the public altar of Jupiter to offer sacrifices to the strange newcomers. A messenger delivered this amazing news to Paul and Barnabas, midst wildly crashing cymbals, booming gongs, and tooting horns. The shock to the unsuspecting ones was beyond expression. They were thunderstruck at such infamy, and they perceived that their efforts had all been misinterpreted. Paul begged them to be

sensible. "We are only men, like yourselves, who have brought glad news of the Christ, to turn away from vanities, useless sacrifices and images of stone to worship of the living God who made the earth and sky and all that is therein."

What a picture of humility Paul presented as he stood in the sunshine amid white-robed priests and draped shiny bulls that snorted against flower garlands. Autumn fruits were piled in a high colorful pyramid — crimson berries, red apples, purple grapes, golden dates, and branches of golden brown leaves! Tenderly he spoke of God's abundance and never failing care. "In long past years God left the nations of the world to walk in their own ways, and yet you are never without evidence of God's constant care for you. In the rain he sends you the fruitful seasons which will fill your homes with food and your hearts with gladness." The ceremony of idolatry ended, and men sought their homes in wonderment — while the bulls went back to their stalls.

Paul encountered mistaken friends there in the city of black rock. Timothy joined him there. Timothy's grandmother, Lois, and his mother, Eunice, were very gracious to the travelers. While Paul and Barnabas worked there, lies from other

cities followed them; consequently the people were soon stirred up against them. Stories were broadcast that Paul and Barnabas were driven from Antioch, and fled from Iconium. One day as Paul preached to the people in the open air, irate Jews approached him as he spoke, and in frenzied hatred they began their cruel torture with flying stones. He did not run away to avoid the missiles, and a heavy stone struck him and his bleeding form fell unconscious to the ground. They jeered and scoffed and dragged his body through the streets over stony pavements and threw it in a heap outside the city gates.

His friends rallied around him, and tenderly carried him to a secluded spot of the countryside. Barnabas rolled his own cloak into a pillow for Paul's head, and sprinkled fresh water over his besmirched face. When darkness fell upon the city, his friends helped him back to comfortable quarters, where they nursed him back to strength again.

Paul had overcome animosity in his thinking. He forgave the abuse of injustice. He knew if the gentle Master could walk the road of thorns, he, too, could stand scourgings, stonings, buffeting, imprisonment — even death! Bravely and courageously he trudged on!

Young Timothy could not forget this cruelty to the beloved apostle, nor understand why his saintly efforts could be so outraged. With ripe maturity he would learn the price of martyrdom.

Bruised and sad at heart, Paul rode away from Lystra and into Derbe where winter creeps quickly upon the fall. In this snow-bound town he settled down for a period of seclusion with his rolls of papyrus which were in preparation, before a large fire of popping, resinous wood knots. When Paul was not permitted to preach, he could still send back epistles for his people. His Biblical teachings live for us through these writings.

Eager seekers of the truth often came to his small room to hear him talk. They huddled by the fire and listened intently. "The love of money is the root of all evil, and many, by reaching and following after it, have been led astray from the true faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows. Goodness with contentment is great gain." When snowdrifts melted and flowed in leaping streams down mountain-sides, the two travelers, Paul and Barnabas, moved on the open roads.

They journeyed to Antioch where church discipline needed their attention. Paul avoided any

possible friction there by absenting himself from the synagogue, where he had previously aroused much consternation. After rules and regulations had received the necessary stimulation, they departed, crossing the flooded river by a narrow bridge and entering into Perga, Pamphylia. Immortal words were left there for his followers to ponder: "Thou are inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things." "But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to Truth."

The travelers went on to Attalia, where they did not remain, but continued on to Seleucia by ship, Paul paying brass and copper coins of queer design for the passage fare. Again in Antioch, he resumed his trade activities. There he found that Peter, white-haired and slightly bent, was falling into the deceitful mesh of the Jews. The subject of circumcision was causing great discord. Some contended, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." Few could understand the freedom which Paul preached, because their bondage of false beliefs was traditional. He wished to settle the argument about

circumcision authoritatively. He hurriedly left for Jerusalem accompanied by Barnabas and Peter. They passed through Phenice and Samaria, and when they arrived in Jerusalem they went to the home of Mark's mother.

The church meeting which convened there was presided over by the aged James. Paul won the argument for the foreigners, thus establishing their rights to enter Christian churches, as Jesus taught. He questioned, "Did not Jesus receive with tenderness women, and were they not without this mark of traditional custom?" Apparently James agreed with Paul, but deep within his thought there still remained a few ideas of early training. He may have disliked Paul's free, open thought and liberal interpretations, for instead of sending back the important message to Christians of Antioch, he sent for the prophets, Judas and Silas, and commissioned them to convey the letter. James established a Christian college at Jerusalem, although he had not personally overcome some of the customs of his people. Paul regretted that there were many who adulterated the pure truths which Christ Jesus taught. They could not realize that creeds were meaningless to infinity.

On their return to Antioch, the letter was read

from the reader's desk by Judas and Silas, causing the teachings of the apostle, Paul, to stand approved in the eyes of the congregation. Judas returned to Jerusalem, but "it pleased Silas to abide there still" and work with Paul and Barnabas in Antioch.

CHAPTER VII

THECLA AND PAUL

(According to the Apocryphal New Testament translated by Montague Rhodes James, Litt. D., F.B.A., F.S.A., Provost of Eton; sometime Provost of King's College, Cambridge, England.)

AT one time while Paul preached in Iconium, a beautiful young maiden named Thecla listened intently to his words. She was betrothed to Thamyris, but when she heard Paul preaching, "Blessed are the bodies of the virgins, for they shall be well pleasing with God and shall not lose the reward of their continence (chastity); for the word of the Father shall be unto them a work of salvation in the day of his son and they shall have rest, world without end," she meditated prayerfully. Then she relinquished her betrothal to serve God. For three days and nights she sat silently by an open window as one in a maze, pondering the words of Paul. Her mother, Theocleia was greatly annoyed by her daughter's strange conduct, for she desired to see her daughter married to Thamyris. However, the power of divine love

illumined the girl's heart and human ties seemed no longer to be a vital necessity in her life. She sought Paul one day and implored him to teach her the lessons of Christianity. He was impressed with her sincerity and receptivity, but hesitated about taking the lovely young woman under his tutelage.

Thamyris was dismayed and questioned, openly, the legal right of Paul to defraud young men of wives, and maidens of husbands, by advising them in his sermons to refrain from marriage. He could not understand how his own human desires could be denied, and the impersonal love which Thecla knew for Paul was beyond the materialist's comprehension.

Thecla's own great ambition became to follow in the footsteps of the Master and unselfishly live to help humanity. Thamyris was a prominent young man in the city, and had no difficulty in appealing to the governor and having Paul imprisoned.

At night Thecla secretly visited the prison. She gave her bracelets to the doorkeeper, and a silver mirror to the jailor, that she might enter into Paul's cell. She had the simplicity and innocence of a child, and sat at his feet and learned more and

more of the Christ love which heals. When her pure thought touched the hem of the Christ garment in consecration, she was destined to become a virgin martyr whose name is reverently recorded in the early Christian Church documents as well as the Apocryphal New Testament.

Paul was scourged and sent from the city, because the people believed him to be possessed of mysterious, magic sorcery. Consternation against the behavior of Thecla aroused the people and she was called before the governor. He questioned her, "Why wilt thou not marry Thamyris according to the law of the Iconians?" She remained calm and silent. She could give no answer which they would understand. Her mother, Theocleia was outraged at her conduct and cried out aloud: "Burn the lawless one; burn her that is no bride in the midst of the theatre that all the women which have been taught by this man Paul may be affrighted." So she was condemned to die, and was delivered naked before the governor, while youths and maidens willingly hastened to bring wood and hay to build the fire. The governor marvelled at the power of the girl Thecla. Her face shone with sublime beauty as she mounted upon the pyre. She made the sign of the cross and

turned her face heavenward for infinite protection — above the earth. She could see the flames leaping up about her, but she felt only the warmth of loving protection enfold her and she was not afraid. The fire never touched her, for suddenly sounds of a storm rumbled, and the clouds poured forth rain and hail, extinguishing the flames entirely. Thecla knew that she had been preserved by the hand of God. Immediately she sought Paul and found him kneeling in prayer, saying, "O Father of Christ let not the fire take hold of Thecla, but spare her for she is Thine." Standing behind him she cried in exultant tones, "O Father that madest heaven and earth, I bless Thee for that Thou hast preserved me from the fire that I might see Paul." The prayer of Paul continued: "O God, the knower of hearts, I bless Thee that Thou hast speedily accomplished that which I asked of Thee and hast hearkened unto me," and he arose from the spot where he knelt.

There was rejoicing in the family of Onesiphorous, where Paul sojourned, because Thecla had been saved. Thecla confided to Paul, "I will cut my hair around about and follow thee whithersoever thou goest." But he answered severely: "The time is ill-favored and thou art comely."

But Thecla insisted, "Only give me the seal in Christ and temptation shall not touch me." And he answered, "Have patience, Thecla, and thou shalt receive the baptism."

Paul took Thecla with him to Antioch. There a certain Syriarch named Alexander saw her, and became enamored and charmed with her beauty. He caused much disturbance by his persistent love-making. Thecla rent his coat and took his wreath from his head and made him a laughing-stock in public. Alexander was humiliated and infuriated and caused her to be summoned before the governor. She confessed that she had done all the things he charged, and she was condemned to the beasts.

Tryphaena, a rich queen, widow of Cotys, king of Thrace, mother of Polemo, King of Pontus, took Thecla into her home for safe-keeping. She had had a daughter, Falconilla, who had died. She believed that her daughter spoke to her in a dream saying, "Mother, thou shalt take in my stead Thecla, the stranger that is desolate, that she may pray for me, that I be translated into the place of the righteous."

At the appointed time the beasts were led into the arena in usual procession. Thecla was bound to a fierce lioness. The people "marveled when

they saw what power God hath given unto men," for the lioness licked the feet of Thecla and would not harm her.

Queen Tryphaena received Thecla after the procession, and wailed aloud that such great beauty as Thecla's was destined to be cast unto the beasts to destroy. Again the governor sent soldiers to fetch Thecla to the Arena. The queen wept bitterly because of this continued persecution for His sake.

Thecla was rudely taken from the protecting arms of Tryphaena, stripped, and a girdle placed upon her. She was then cast into the stadium before many spectators and lions and bears were set against her. A savage lioness ran toward her, but strangely, she paused and lay down meekly at her feet. When a ferocious bear leaped toward Thecla, the lioness arose and fought off the beast and tore him asunder. A trained lion belonging to Alexander ran toward the girl; the faithful lioness wrestled with the lion, but she was slain in the combat. Women moaned and groaned when this thing happened. Thecla stretched forth her hands and prayed for deliverance. She was directed to turn and behold a tank of water. She cast herself into the water, murmuring as she did so, "In the

name of Jesus Christ, so I baptize myself on this last day." All the people wept. The governor was moved to melancholia and regretted that the beautiful girl would so soon be devoured by the seals in the tank. Light, like a flash of fire, shot through the skies suddenly and into the arena, and behold the seals were seen floating dead on the top of the water. A cloud of fire encircled Thecla and the beasts could not touch her, neither could she be seen by the people to be naked. Alexander was not satisfied that his plans were a failure, so he suggested to the governor that his own bulls be used for the purpose of killing Thecla. He was certain that the animals could be enraged by placing hot irons beneath their abdomens. The governor wished to cease the torture of Thecla, but Alexander continued his cruel pursuit.

Thecla was bound by the feet between the bulls, but the flame that burned about her burned through the ropes, and again she was unharmed. Queen Tryphaena fainted at the entry of the bulls, and loud cries of "Queen Tryphaena is dead!" rent the air. The governor stopped the games at once, and Alexander in fearful, superstitious panic besought the governor to free all the condemned ones before Caesar's wrath should be showered

upon the city because of the fate of his kinswoman, Queen Tryphaena.

The governor called Thecla before him and inquired: "Who art thou and what hast thou about thee that not one of the beasts hath touched thee?" She answered: "I am the handmaid of the living God. I have believed on God and His Son. For He alone is the way of salvation and the substance of life immortal; for unto them that are tossed about, He is a refuge; unto the oppressed, relief; unto the despairing, shelter; and in a word, whosoever believeth on Him shall not die, but live everlastingly."

The governor ordered garments brought to clothe Thecla and released her saying, "I release unto you Thecla, the godly servant of God." When Tryphaena recovered, she was told of Thecla's freedom, and before a great gathering of people she declared, "Now do I believe that my child liveth." Thecla went to the home of Tryphaena and rested for eight days where she taught the word of God to the entire household and they rejoiced in this confidence.

Thecla followed Paul to Myra, though he entreated her to "go and teach the word of God," and she returned to Iconium after leaving with

Paul much gold and apparel, from Queen Tryphaena, for the ministry of the poor. When she arrived in her home city she found Thamyris dead. Her life was dedicated to preaching and teaching. She lived to be ninety years old. It is believed that she went to Rome by the underground road, for her body was buried there. Her Christian influence grew over East and West and made her the most famous of early virgin martyrs. From the simple faith of a young girl arose the strong and popular cult of the Saint Thecla of history.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CROSS

PAUL endeavored to visit frequently the numerous small churches which he had established. He prepared to make such a journey, and Barnabas would not accompany him unless his nephew Mark could go also. Paul preferred having Silas accompany them. They could not agree upon the subject, and by this trivial inharmony the two friends, Paul and Barnabas, parted, never to meet again. Barnabas and Mark went to Cyprus; Silas accompanied Paul back to Tarsus.

Paul remembered sadly that his parents no longer lived to greet him on his return; but he found many of his old friends there who would always love Paul, the man, as they had loved Paul, the lad.

In Tarsus he wrote: "And thus did Jesus, by His death, reconcile Jews and strangers in one God, having slain the enmity between them; preaching good tidings to the foreigners afar off, and to the Jews who are near. Foreigners then are no more foreigners and travelers, but fellow

citizens with the Christians and members of the household of God, in a house built upon the foundation laid by the apostles and the prophets; Jesus himself being the chief corner stone, in whom all building rightly put together grows into a holy temple in the Lord. And thus are you built together for a dwelling-place of God in the Spirit."

From Tarsus, Paul and Silas traveled over the dark mountains to Derbe and Lystra, where Paul admonished the Christians to "put on the new life of righteousness, speaking no falsehood to each other, and forgiving as Jesus forgave all transgressions."

Paul rejoiced to see Timothy at Lystra. He admired the youth's staunch stand for Christianity, and often spoke of him as his "beloved son," and "true child in the faith of Jesus." He warned him to refrain from listening to the appeal of all false gods. "Fight a good fight; hold to the faith; keep a good conscience; refuse to listen to bad stories and old wives' tales. Exercise for the body is good, but activity in goodness of thought is better; strive, work, and seek righteousness in all ways. May the favor of God be with you."

Numerous villages and remote hamlets were visited by Paul, Silas, and Timothy en route to the

rich province of Bithynia. They were directed to go westward to the great city of Troy at the edge of the Aegean Sea. They traversed the battle-fields of Homer's poems, and they rode past mystic Mysia. The trip proved a hard one for Paul. He now felt the hardship of the inconvenient sleeping-places which they visited along the way, as well as the tiresome jolting over steep hills.

In Troy he met the beloved physician, Luke, who wrote the narrative of his life in the Acts of the Apostles, and became Paul's loyal friend. While in an exalted state of thought there, he dreamed that a man from Macedonia stood beside his bed holding out his hand, begging him to come over the sea to help him. The next morning Paul confided this significant dream to Luke, Silas, and Timothy, and they all interpreted it as meaning that God's wish was for him to go and teach in Macedonia, near the coast.

This meant a long boat trip, followed by a land journey on donkeys. So they started off for Philippi with Luke as a guide. At length they reached Philippi, the city named for Philip of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great.

Upon their arrival they were informed that the Christians met for prayer in a quiet spot by the

river in a green vale at a little distance. On the Sabbath day the four set out to find the place of worship. They found the worshippers in a deep hollow amid roses and bushes. Much to Paul's astonishment, they were all women. The most important person among them was Lydia, who was clad in beautiful purple. She was a native of Thyatira, a town in Asia, eighty miles away from Troy, famous for its dyed cloths. She sold these materials to the people of Philippi, and was regarded as a woman of discrimination and wealth. She was not a Jewess, but she worshipped God according to Paul's teachings. She was a receptive follower, and asked baptism for herself and all her children.

Paul and his three associates, Luke, Silas, and Timothy, accepted Lydia's invitation to become her house guests during their sojourn in Philippi. So the first Christian that Paul won in Europe was a woman. The fold grew, and soon word was broadcast that there were strange teachings being uttered there under the trees by the river. The citizens regarded it all with some mystery and suspicion.

There was a slave girl in the city who had the ability to throw her voice as our modern ventrilo-

quists do. Her weird antics on the city streets brought her owners neat sums of money. She was fascinated by the sight of Paul and his brethren, and followed them many times to their retreat of worship.

In doing this she neglected her performances for the people who paid well for her strange prophecies. One day she followed the disciples along the streets and cried aloud, "These men are the slaves of the Most High who tell you the way to be saved," and people were very curious and questioned her. She tossed her luxuriant dark tresses wildly and defiantly continued to pursue the four Nazarenes. This annoyed Paul, and he turned around and spoke to her emphatically as if addressing the demon within her, saying, "I tell you in the name of Jesus Christ come out of the girl." She stared into Paul's face with amazement, and she was unable to call to them again. The mesmerism of false belief which held her in bondage had been broken, and she could no longer amuse the public with her eccentricities. The men who owned her were sorely displeased at this evident change, and they sought out Paul to punish him. Angry people were soon attracted, and surrounded Paul and Silas, and dragged and buffeted them through

the streets. They were brought before the chief magistrates, who sat in dignity bedecked in rich damask cloaks bordered with gaudy purple. The charge which rang out against them resounded in loud denunciation: "These men are Jews. They are troubling our city greatly by teaching the people customs which it is lawless for us to accept; for we are all Romans." On all sides the cries rang out, "Jew! Jew!" As a sign of anger, the judges tore off their own tunics before the gaze of the motley crowd. The sergeants were ordered to beat the two offenders, Paul and Silas, with rods.

The two disciples were immediately rushed to the whipping-post in the market square. They were stripped to the waist, and made to face the post, with their hands tied behind it. The crowd laughed and scoffed as the naked backs were flogged with fierce strokes from birch rods, until they became a bruised network of trickling red.

Then they were taken to the common jail and thrown into a foul-smelling dungeon without windows. In a corner there was mildewed straw for beds, unused, as the prisoners' feet were safely thrust into wooden stocks fixed securely to the walls. This was a revolting experience for Paul and his companion.

In the black of the night they raised their voices in songs of praise to God. Other prisoners heard the sweet melodies floating through the still air, and a great perplexity fell upon all within the prison. It was such a sultry night that sounds pierced peculiarly. Suddenly the earth quivered, heaving prison doors creaked, and pillars dropped in a crash, sending forth terrifying alarm. The prisoners' stocks were loosened from the walls. It was an earthquake, and doors of the prison were rocked open. Freedom beckoned the prisoners. The jailor awoke, and in terror ran about to make sure that there were no escapes. He became panicky and was about to fall upon his own sword rather than face punishment for the escape of his prisoners. From a distant dark corner Paul's voice rang out clearly, "Do not stab yourself, we are all here." Then in the faint lantern-light the jailer identified the two prisoners and bade them come out.

It was an opportunity for Paul, and he told the jailer of the Christ truths and the protection of God. With new-born tenderness, the jailer took the two prisoners with him to his own home. There he washed their wounded backs and carefully bathed them in soothing oils.

The jailer was astounded to learn of Paul's birthright as a Roman citizen, and abhorred the fact that such an error had been made. The son of a Roman citizen scourged in their city! The seed of true Christianity was planted there in that home, and the jailer and his entire family were baptized in the Christian faith. The men remained the jailer's honored guests until the next day.

When word reached the magistrates that they had grossly insulted Roman citizens of great learning, they were all grieved at their offence and were willing to make any amends in apology. Paul informed them that, the day before, they had given him no chance for explanation about his birthright. Paul well knew his rights as a free Roman citizen of Tarsus. Humble apologies followed the mistake, and official heads bent low before Paul and Silas in retribution for the errors made.

During the weeks which followed, many seekers visited Lydia's home, and listened eagerly to Paul's eloquent teaching. His black hair now shone with streaks of silver, and his natal day marked half a century. Twenty years had his faithful hands clutched the cross of martyrdom for Jesus' sake. Nearly all his letters to the churches were

dictated, and it was his custom to pen a few lines in his own characteristic broad scrawl at the close of the missives. His great courage never faltered and he breathed the strength of conquered fear. As years wore on, inspiration lived more closely in his discipleship. His thinking became more and more spiritualized, and his words of instruction reflected more exalted understanding of the living God.

While they remained in the home of Lydia, many long winter hours passed in which Paul dictated epistles of immortal beauty. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do His good pleasure." His inspired epistles were not intended for one church alone, but were passed from one to the other in unified purpose. The church he addressed received the message first, then sent it on to the others.

When Paul departed from Philippi he may have carried with him a letter from there to Thessalonica, where a resident named Jason became his host. A loving farewell was given to him by his new-found friends of Philippi, Sopater, Gaius, and Secundus, Roman magistrates.

Paul resumed his weaving and spinning for the

Thessalonica trade. Money was so scarce in Thessalonica at that time that it became necessary for Paul and Silas to work both day and night to earn sufficient money for their livelihood. (The coins used had a man's head stamped on one side and a winged woman on the other.) The two workers sold their wares in the market place and along the wharves, mingling with the crowds. The smoky oil lamps they used were not always pleasant in the long winter evenings, for the light was poor and the odor repellent.

Paul spoke boldly to the Thessalonians. "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread. Be not weary in well doing." The followers there listened intently at first, then the old serpent of suspicion crept in with poisonous hatred in wranglings and disputes. Antagonists openly contradicted Paul's words. He expressed great charity, gentleness, spirit in industry, the great love of which Drummond wrote.

The most earnest Christian followers of Thessalonica were from the ranks of dyers, potters, saddlers, carpenters, boat-builders, tradesmen, sailors. Some were slaves, others, free-born. Ofttimes men of profound learning were fired by Paul's teachings. Many women, carefully hooded, stood spellbound to hear his words. These women were wives of rich citizens; but they did not hesitate to stand beside a slave girl to hear the Christ truth. "You need no instruction from me, for you are taught of God to love one another."

When the wintry blasts raged, Paul and Silas were sometimes hard-pressed for money. At this period, Epaphras, a messenger, came to them from Philippi and brought a present from Lydia and her coworkers there. The loving kindness which prompted this sending of gifts, touched Paul deeply as he unwrapped the offerings of dried fruits, parched corn, oil, wine, clothing, and a little money. He expressed his gratitude with heartfelt sincerity.

When spring appeared again, and boats began to move freely in the harbor, the success of the Christians seemed untouched by any traces of inharmony. But in this very success lurked danger for Paul and Silas. A plot was planned in the

crowded market place. Wild announcements rent the air regarding their former imprisonment and flogging. Crowds move like puppets in waves of mesmerism. Excitedly the throng began to scoff and denounce the two disciples, and demand that they be summoned before magistrates. Hatred, the murderer of love's purpose, was again at work!

A motley crowd surged through the streets to Jason's house, reasoning among themselves, "Was not Jason too in league with the accused men?" Jason heard the mob and tried to hold the door against them. Wild cries from husky, mad throats shrieked, "Give up the strange Jews to us! Give them up!" They broke the door, and it fell in with a thud to the floor. Hundreds of angered fiends with swinging sticks poured into the handsome house like wild horses that troop across western mesa lands. The search began, but Paul and Silas could not be found. They charged them with plotting against the Roman emperor. Jason, and a few remaining Christian friends in the house, were ushered to the market place, and charged with conspiracy for housing criminals. Jason, being a man of wealth, furnished adequate bond money to release his friends and himself. Paul

and Silas escaped. Faithful Jason would never deny his Christian faith at any time, and this glorious conviction of his became one of the stones laid in the firm foundation of the Christian church at Thessalonica.

On the night of their escape, Paul and Silas wended their way in the moonlight, cautiously touching strange whitewashed walls of the Egnatian Way, fleeing into the hillside town of Berea. This town was walled; it overlooked a wide plain and a forest, with singing waters dividing them. They found friends everywhere. In Berea they visited friends, and were soon settled comfortably among their own countrymen.

Paul spoke in the synagogue on the first Sabbath of their residence in Berea. "Is God to be a God of Jews only? Is he not one God who is also the God of foreigners? Yes, of foreigners also: for there is but one God, and by death He saves both Jews and strangers. So we then make the Jewish law of no effect through this faith? God forbid, for we establish it. Seek to be like God as beloved children, loving one another ever as Jesus loved you and gave himself for you, an offering and a sacrifice and incense of a sweet smell to God. See that unfaithfulness, impurity, and greed are not

even named among you, as becomes Christians. Let there be giving of thanks; let no person deceive you with empty words, because of these things the wrath of God comes from disobedient men."

Peace reigned there in quiet Berea, and those who did not agree with Paul's teachings remained silent and considerate. Merchants with their camels, steaming with the touch of the elements of hot summer, daily passed back and forth through the stuffy narrow streets of Berea.

Enemies finally found Paul at Berea, and he moved on alone. He crossed Macedonia and paused at the mouth of the harbor, undecided as to his destination. A boat appeared ready to sail for Athens, and he decided to go there. It was a trip of two hundred and fifty miles, and would take more than a week's time. He believed that he would find temporary shelter in Athens from the storms of persecution. He missed his associates, Silas and Timothy, exceedingly on this voyage. The ocean trip was invigorating and restful to Paul. He loved the rhythmic song of the waves as they dashed snowy foam against the boat. He sailed down the gulf of Thessalonica close to the western shore, with cloudy Olympus, Ossa and Pelion, so famous in Greek poetry, appearing con-

spicuously. Superstition caused the sailors to anchor at night, so in that way passengers and crew were lulled to sleep by the sound of lapping waves and splashing spray. During the daytime Paul sat in a secluded spot in the ship, and spiritual thoughts were undisturbed. Steadfast thoughts which wing down through all ages! "Crushed on every side, yet not broken nor perplexed and not in despair; pursued but not overtaken, struck down but not destroyed; we do always bear about in our bodies the marks of the death of Jesus. His life may be shown forth in us. And we do not fall, for although our bodies weaken, our spirit is renewed day by day. These light afflictions which are but for a moment, work more and more for our everlasting glory, the while we look not on the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Paul saw the sun dance upon the white temple of Minerva on Cape Sunium in the faint distance, as the boat headed toward the picturesque gulf of Athens. Then he gradually entered the great harbor of Piraeus, the seaport of Athens. Important granaries and produce buildings lined the port,

where meat, corn, flour, dried fruits, wine, oil, and fish awaited the Athenians' distribution.

Athens is high in the beautiful hills. The road leading down to the sea from the city was once carefully protected with high walls known as "long walls"; however, destructive warfare left many marks along the way.

Some of man's finest creative work in marble statue and architectural building was done in Athens. As a city of art achievements, it was interesting to all travelers.

Acquaintances from Berea accompanied Paul from Piraeus to Athens, and together they viewed the superb beauty of the hill of the Acropolis, with its temple buildings of gorgeous coloring and perfect symmetry. There, glistening in the sunlight, stood the Parthenon, the largest of its kind! They beheld the bronze masterpiece of the great sculptor, Phidias. Minerva, with her shining armor and striking clearness of outline, could be seen for many miles at sea.

Idolatry enveloped all Athens like a mist, but Paul understood the needs of the people. There were costly statues on all sides, made of richest agate and porphyry, marble and burnished gold with delicate shades blended into the scheme of

creation. Years before, Paul, the learned youth, would have enjoyed Athens with enthusiasm; but now his interest and desire for the Christ vision, alone, filled his mind. How eager he was to release the manacles of sense testimony which he beheld there all about him, and teach them the wealth of simplicity — His possessions!

Gorgeous figures of ladies, bedecked with jewels, passed him on litters carried by garish slaves; rows of Greek women, in white and purple flowing robes, with hair coiled loosely, wearing gold and red sandals, moved about the streets of Athens. Flower-girls sold fresh blossoms on the street corners.

Paul soon found his countrymen where they lived apart from the fair-complexioned Greeks of the city. When he was conducted to safe quarters, the Bereans left him and turned back to their own duties. They carried back a message to Silas and Timothy in which Paul urged their early joining him there.

He seemed to be stifled with the atmosphere of the city, its rich glamour of literature, art, and idolatry! Heaviness bowed the figure with its brown cloak, for he realized the gigantic task, ahead, of establishing a Christian church in the

heart of Athens. False gods on every side! So-called philosophies of every nature were embraced by educated men.

It was his custom upon arrival in a new city to speak in the Jewish synagogue. Here he gathered together people of all beliefs and spoke to them of Christianity. He remembered that Socrates had taught there many years before him in public talks. Plato, too, had spoken to interested listeners. Demosthenes spoke on Phyx Hill in the people's meeting-place, and in the great theatre of Dionysius. Aeschylus had presentations of his play before thousands on marble tile seats beneath a brilliant yellow awning.

As the years wore on, no one could mistake the fact that Paul was a Jew. Simplicity was exemplified in all his ways. His penetrating glance scrutinized the passers-by who often thrust the meek man of God aside in the footpath. But these things could not now disturb him, for he had learned to love all mankind and forgive, as Jesus did.

To the men of Corinth he wrote one of his epistles in which inspiration seems to have changed his usual style of diction. The thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, a literary gem of the Bible,

has been referred to by litterateurs as "The Anthem of Love," and "The Psalm of Love." It was the "Song of Love" for the New Testament, just as Solomon's "Song of Songs" is for the Old Testament.

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

"And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

"And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

"Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.

"Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

"Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

"Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

"Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be

tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

"For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. For when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

In the original, ancient interpretation, the word "charity" (from the Latin "*caritas*") meant a great superior love. The reference to seeing "through a glass, darkly," may have been suggested by the inadequacy of the mirrors which were in use at that time. They were made of metal with a surface which was not true, and reflected distorted images. Paul's words signify that he visualized the perfect reflection.

He strolled over the ground where Aristotle and his disciples trod by the Cephissus, with its fringe of silver-grey olive and green bay-trees and songs of nightingales. As he viewed the Academy where

Plato taught, probably he was impressed with the thought of many tongues referred to in his letter to the Corinthians. Did the knowledge depicted in door mottoes and statues, won as prizes, along unique Tripod Street, ring as empty cymbals and sounding brass in comparison with the priceless knowledge of God?

There, too, stood the Temple of the Winds where altars were erected to Pity, Modesty, Fame, Venus, and the Earth. High on the top of the temple stood a quaint little bronze man turning with switch in hand to designate the direction of the wind. Superstition thrived "like a green bay-tree" in Athens. Furies were supposed to dwell in a deep chasm of a rocky spot in the hill, and the people feared to approach it because it held a death penalty. Beside the river, Ilissus, and the Olympic arena, was the famous well of clear water called Callirhoe.

Paul worked alone in Athens for three weeks. Then Silas and Timothy joined him there. The messages they delivered from other churches were not encouraging. Timothy conveyed word from Thessalonica that the Jews of the synagogue were cruelly persecuting the Christians. Silas brought tidings from Berea that Paul was forbidden to

return to Macedonia. Luke remained in Philippi. Then the two coworkers, Silas and Timothy, returned to Philippi and Thessalonica. An urgent letter was dispatched to the Thessalonians, at this time, from Paul.

"Rejoice in the Lord alway! In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

"Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ. Brethren, be not weary in well doing. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

In the painted porches of the market place he spoke to Stoics and Epicureans and often enjoyed mental sparring with men of alert intellectuality. His eloquence held many listeners until he began to propound the teachings of Christ Jesus. Then they ridiculed, and he was forced to turn to the plain tradesmen to tell his sacred message. Learned men of Athens inquired among themselves, "What is this babbler trying to say?"

There was an ancient council in Athens called the Areopagus, which at one time stopped Socrates

from public speaking because they disapproved of his teachings. Scholarly men of old were unafraid, and met regularly in debate and pleasant social communion on Mars Hill, the mountain of red rock. The fathers of the city enjoyed this custom for many years.

The council there summoned Paul before them. He slowly ascended the rock steps of Mars Hill and waited for the questioning. They asked: "Will you tell us about this new teaching you are speaking of to the people? We hear that you are saying strange things, and we wish to know what they mean." From the city streets below rose the faint, distant buzz of the moving populace.

Paul placed reliance upon God as he spoke and divine strength fired his words. "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription: 'To The Unknown God.' Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." "Without knowing the unknown God you worship him. It is about this unknown God that I speak to the people."

There was a sudden stir among the white-robed men gathered within the marble circle. Paul

quoted freely from their well-loved classics. The listeners liked this, for they appreciated his knowledge of the Greek poets. A passage from Phaenomena won their applause. He gained their attention by his learning and ability to speak. He praised their magnificent temples from the standpoint of artistic attainment. He then continued: "Seeing, then, that we are all children of God, we ought not to think of Him as a figure shaped out of silver, gold or marble by the art and skill of man; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing that he giveth to all life, and breath and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, though he be not far from every one of us; for in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, for we are also His offspring."

"And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead some mocked; and others said, 'We will hear thee again of this matter.'" The chairman of the assembly waved him aside politely. Worldly knowledge and its attendant egotism governed the

situation. Paul walked slowly down the sixteen steps from the philosopher's rostrum, and descended to the simple folk of the market place. His teachings about Jesus Christ and life everlasting had been amusing to men of education! He decided then and there never again to resort to winning the favor and attention of an audience by uttering literary episodes and quotations to please mortal thoughts. If he could not gain spontaneous interest from listeners when he spoke the truth, he was determined not to arouse sympathetic heed otherwise.

From all the mighty council of Athens, but one man, Dionysius, of culture and position, followed Paul's teaching. Later the woman, Damaris, became a believer also.

The experience of ridicule, indifference, and scorn helped to usher him from the city at an early date. The polished, arrogant scholars and their tactics were too self-satisfied.

He departed from Athens without being driven out as in other cities. He left messages for Silas and Timothy to be delivered upon their arrival there, and then took up his lonely journey towards Corinth, forty miles away.

When he arrived in the rich city of Corinth he

soon found a dwelling-place among his own people, for a rabbi was always welcome among them. He met the men there to whom he addressed important later epistles.

Aquila and his wife, Priscilla, Christians from the Jewish followers of Rome, met him there. They also were tent-makers and invited him to sojourn with them. Happy conferences convened in their tiny house, as they all combined their efforts in weaving, spinning, and teaching.

Paul mingled with other merchants and sold his wares in the market place, where he frequently saw crowds of boisterous, drunken sailors loitering.

Corinth was dedicated to idolatry. Revels of debauchery were held in the temple of Venus, and a thousand slave women were compelled to take part in them. Corinthians would not accept Paul's teaching generally, but asked numerous questions through morbid curiosity. Silas and Timothy arrived with a message of love from Paul's followers, which deeply touched his heart.

He learned that the congregations were prospering, and that they longed to see him again. Jason and his associates had risen to the heights of demonstration during harsh treatment in Thessalonica, and news of their conduct had spread to

provinces of Achaia and Macedonia, where Christians regarded them as upright examples. Silas and Timothy regretted to confide in Paul about the greed and lust which tempted many of their church members. Then there were others who believed that the coming of Jesus would be at such an early date that they refused to work, and just sat waiting. Paul realized that these errors must be erased with facts of right instruction and guidance.

With the coming of Silas and Timothy, he turned to preaching in the synagogue one day with renewed vigor and strength. The divine truths he uttered sparkled with spontaneity. He held his audience for a time, then they became hard-hearted and insolent. They called him names, and denounced the name of Jesus Christ. This seemed to be a test he could not endure without remonstrance. He could not hear his beloved Master's name ridiculed and maligned without resentment. He became angered and seized his grey tunic with both hands and shook it at them as if shaking the dust of their presence from him. He said, "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean; from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles." His countrymen murmured with loud, angry tones as he left the temple with Justus Crispus, chief syna-

gogue ruler, and several other followers accompanied him.

"Know you that you are each a temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwells within you; if any man should destroy the temple of God, him will God destroy, for the temple of God which you are, is holy. The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God."

CHAPTER IX

SANDALS OF SERVICE

PAUL'S preaching was the exemplification of his daily life. Ill treatment from his own Jewish people, and the sight of the many gods about him caused a sad heaviness at times. One night as he rested on his couch he dreamed that Jesus talked with him, and he heard His words distinctly: "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace. For I am with thee, and no man shall set upon thee to hurt thee; for I have many people in this city." And he understood it to be a direct message. For a year and a half he remained in Corinth preaching the gospel to Jews and foreigners alike.

Unfortunately, the Christians' meeting-place was next-door to the Jewish synagogue; consequently the Jews thought the Christian services were especially designed to detract from the synagogue ceremonies. So they tried to have Paul and his followers removed. "Many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized,"

but it was principally the poorer element of the city who sought Christian teaching.

As Paul and his followers sat partaking of a simple meal together, he urged them all to be of one family and to love one another. "Fly from the worship of idols. The cup of wine over which we ask the blessing of God, is it not a communion of the blood of Jesus? And the bread which we break, is it not a communion of the divine body; seeing that the Christians, who are many, are as one bread and one body; for we all eat of the one loaf!" What a humble picture is presented, in Biblical narrative, of that communion of love, that true feast of simplicity!

Paul with Silas and Timothy spent a long winter in the home of Aquila, the weaver. He wrote his letter to the Thessalonians which is recorded as the oldest part of the New Testament. "Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness. God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."

At this time only notes and references of the sayings of Jesus existed for teachers' use. As Paul sent out the first letter to the Thessalonians, it was read and copied by Christians in all prov-

inces, and later became an important contribution to the New Testament. Rabbis frequently wrote to distant congregations, so the idea was not original with Paul. Many of Paul's writings were clothed in wondrous expression, and they were not always understood by simple followers, according to words written by the fisherman-apostle Peter who said: "Our brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, as also in all letters, speaking in them of matters in which there are some things hard to understand, which the ignorant and unsteady wrest unto their own destruction."

Paul endeavored to deal in generalities in his writings, although there were specific cases which required clear, individual correcting.

Timothy wrote as Paul dictated in the evenings by the lamplight in their small room. A scroll of papyrus, liquid soot, and a reed pen took the famous words down in Greek lettering. Paul was analytical in his thinking. If his early training did nothing more for him, it developed a great human power to think and to reason diplomatically. He signed, sealed, and wrapped his letters carefully within a roll of water-proof haircloth which he had made, that they might withstand a stormy journey.

Isthmian games, held on the Isthmus of Corinth, were enjoyed every two years. These Corinthian festivities ranked next to the great Olympic games of Athens. People flocked from all directions to see the games. Ships from foreign lands dotted near-by seaports. They were laden with fine race-horses from Syria; bears, wolves, and dogs from Asia; tigers and lions from Africa. The ownership of these vessels was indicated by the decorations of imposing crests and golden wings. Many instruments were played on this jovial occasion; tambourines, pipes, and small harps twanged along the streets. Dancing-girls with tinkling bells on their ankles, and clicking castanets in their hands added their notes to the celebration.

White-robed priests rattled gongs calling carnal followers up to the temple revelries, which touched the depths of iniquity.

The prizes for the athletic tournaments were head-wreaths cut from the wood of Neptune's temple with a knife of gold. These wreaths were apparently of little consequence, but the lads who won them had monuments erected in their honor by the city and state to which they belonged. Strength, grace, and agility were regarded as the

greatest of earthly possessions in those days. Thirty thousand men watched the running-races of the Isthmian games. None but pure Greeks could enter. On one day wrestling was featured as the attraction, and the naked, oiled bodies of men leaping and grappling in scientific contest held the pleasure-seekers spellbound.

There were agility tests in which men leaped before wild tigers, to the bestial cries of the crowd who urged the primitive play. Another event included chariot races, with their clamoring sounds of hoofs, whirling whips, and grinding, locking wheels, in a shower of driving sand from the course, to the refrain of frenzied, barbaric cries. This tournament season was of vast importance, and the coins issued then bore the significant word, "Isthmia," which was surrounded by the design of a wreath of leaves tied by a ribbon.

Paul pondered on these festivities of the people and the fading wreaths of honor. It was the prize of spiritual effort alone which he considered worthy of attainment — the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. He remembered his childhood games of fifty years before, in Tarsus, where the sports held an important place in community activities.

Again he dictated Thessalonian epistles to young Timothy, describing the conditions of the day, with such accuracy as to give his letters permanent historic value.

Gallio, a gentle-minded man, became governor about this time. He was a brother of the statesman, Seneca, of Latin book fame. While he sat placidly in his white ivory chair in the open court of black and white tiles, a great noise arose in the streets and a throng surged closer and closer with cries for judgment. They were dragging and cuffing Paul along roughly, and brought him into the presence of Gallio, who tried to understand the situation. He finally learned that the charge against Paul was that he left the synagogue of the Jews, and preached in a meeting-house next door. Sosthenes, the accuser, said, "This man is persuading men to worship God contrary to the law."

Gallio could not be influenced into thinking that they cared so much about the Roman law, so he decided that Paul was not guilty, and he told the Jews emphatically, "Settle your disputes among yourselves." Roman guards forced the persistent Jews into the streets. Paul's words may have been familiar to Gallio before this date, for he

admired his humility and gentleness. Paul felt confident of the fairness of a Roman judge.

Among the converts of Corinth were Crispus, chief of the synagogue; Erastus, treasurer of the city, and Zenas, a Jewish lawyer. Paul preached assurance that the power of God triumphs over all learning, although it seemed a contradiction to their former teachings. He said, "Brethren, when I came to you, I came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. And my speech and preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. The spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. We have the mind of Christ."

Eighteen months passed speedily at Corinth, for his works there were fruitful. He bade his friends farewell and departed, leaving to them a church of firm foundation to testify to immortal truths. Silas and Timothy did not accompany him to Ephesus, but Aquila and his wife traveled with him. Timothy returned to Lystra, his for-

which are with me at Antioch, join in wishing the grace and peace of God to be upon all the Christians of Galatia."

"Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. Ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

"I certify you brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man, neither was I taught it, but by revelation of Jesus Christ. Grace be to you and peace from God the Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen."

As Paul departed with Timothy from Antioch, the church members there gathered around them in loving farewell. The Antioch church was one of wealth. Members supplied the best beasts of burden for Paul and Timothy, and graciously accompanied them far into the outskirts of the city, giving them gifts of fruits, dried corn, wine, oil, and a replenished wardrobe. Paul left beloved brethren in Antioch that he would never visit again.

A week later they rode into Tarsus to rest. Paul's hair, so like a raven's wing in his youth, was now grey like his piercing eyes and the cloth of his tunic. Old Tarsus friends rallied around him—playmates of childhood that were now bent with mature burdens! He paused at the women's screen in the synagogue where his adoring mother had clasped his hand so tightly as she whispered words of tenderness to him. Family ties were strong and unchanging with the Jews. As Paul gazed at the quaint Tarsus synagogue he realized that "if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." And the words of Jesus came to mind: "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

A last farewell was spoken at Tarsus, the city of his proud birth, and Paul departed, never to return. He paused at familiar spots by the waterside, and on the crest of the hill. He did not know then that he would never again see the city he called home.

Returning to Derbe, he greeted all his old friends and told them of his great astonishment that they should "so quickly turn from what he had taught

which are with me at Antioch, join in wishing the grace and peace of God to be upon all the Christians of Galatia."

"Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. Ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

"I certify you brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man, neither was I taught it, but by revelation of Jesus Christ. Grace be to you and peace from God the Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen."

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in the name of Jesus, turning to a thing which is not a gospel. The God who made Peter the apostle of Jews, who believed in circumcision, made me also the apostle of foreigners."

After a short sojourn at Derbe, Paul and Timothy then went to Lystra, the home city of Timothy. Paul repeated, to followers there, the words propounded while sailing in Peter's boat — warning against the leaven of the Pharisees whose evil words, if they were heeded, would bring error of thinking to all of them.

He then rode on to Iconium where he lovingly recalled with appreciation the tender care of friends five years before. He remembered the kindly attention Barnabas administered in his weariness and illness. He urged the people to be free from the entanglement of all false laws, and implored them not to assume such a yoke of slavery when enlightenment was at hand.

Galatia was then visited briefly, and from there he traveled on towards Ephesus. It was summer time, and the woods were dangerous for unprotected travelers, because of robbers and wild animals. There were shelters built along the way, to house travelers over night. They were crude structures, but Paul welcomed such a haven at

the close of a long dusty day on the road. He rode through the massive Smyrna gate into the city of Ephesus. He made his way slowly through the streets to the Jews' section of the city. And in every Jewish settlement could be found a synagogue with its mark of grapes and vine carved over the door.

The trip proved wearisome for Paul. His oak staff bent with his leaning form as he led the ass to a shed. His life mission seemed to press upon him more and more with the passing years. Humanity's need appeared appalling at times, and "the laborers few."

Aquila and Priscilla, the weavers, still resided in Ephesus, and Paul soon located them. He rejoiced in the news they imparted about Apollos of Alexandria, the town at the mouth of the Nile.

Jerusalem Jews harbored a deep hatred for the Jews of Alexandria, because they had translated the Bible from Hebrew into Greek, three hundred years before Jesus was born. They called it "The Translation of the Seventy," because seventy men had participated in its translation. Paul read it as well as his own Hebrew version of the Bible, together with the Latin classics.

Paul learned that Aquila and Priscilla had taken the enthusiastic young Apollos into their home where he was privileged to hear Jesus' teachings, as they attended to their necessary spinning and weaving. He sat on a mat on the floor near by. Apollos was receptive, and became a great dynamic power for the cause of Christianity. His handsome face and marked eloquence easily won many followers. He continued to baptize the people with the words of John the Baptist. Paul corrected this rite in Ephesus by applying the simple words of Christ Jesus himself and accentuating the idea of the Master's appointed Sonship. The presence of the Holy Ghost was acknowledged when Paul's baptism fell upon bowed heads. "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

Again Paul sojourned with Aquila and Priscilla in their home near the harbor. At this time Ephesus worshipped many idols. The citizens were proud that their city was termed "the Temple keeper," for a Temple of Diana had stood there on one spot for over a thousand years. Four hundred years before, when Alexander the Great was born, the temple was burned one night; and there, in its place, stood the wonderful new temple

designed by Dinocrates, a Macedonian, and paid for with great quantities of gold and silver from men of Asia. It also represented rich jewels from many ladies of the country. Near by there was a gold statue of Artemidorus, who went to Rome to plead for the wonderful temple.

As Paul preached at Ephesus, many listeners left his gathering and joined the students of Tyrannus, a teacher of a heathen philosophy "having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart."

Spring unfolded in all its warmth and beauty, and Paul began his journey to various cities to preach. He visited Smyrna, Laodicea, Colosse, Hierapolis, Sardis, Philadelphia, Pergamos, and Thyatira. "And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul."

CHAPTER X

GLORY STRUGGLES THROUGH THE FOG

PAUL communicated with Apollos and commended him for his splendid, steadfast work at Corinth. But it was evident that the Corinthians insisted upon keeping their idols, and the way became a difficult one there for Apollos.

Titus was teaching at Crete and Paul advised him to beware of foolish talkers who teach Jewish tales and traditions for money. In Paul's writing, Titus was referred to as a "true child in their common Christianity."

It was necessary for Paul to make a hurried call to the Corinthians because of the unfaithfulness of some of his followers. He met Apollos, and expressed his appreciation to him for his strength and fidelity.

Then he returned to Ephesus, where superstition was growing apace despite all opportunities for Christian enlightenment. A common custom was the wearing of a small parchment piece bearing inane words. Fortune-tellers began to predict anything they chose for gullible victims. The

people regarded Paul with a certain reverent awe, for God worked special powers of deliverance through him. His healings increased as he became a clearer transparency for the Christ light of love. He now understood more definitely the application of divine law. Superstitious folk touched his garment, believing it possessed strange power of healing and relief. All this was unknown to the apostle, who termed ignorant practices "foolishness with God."

Upon several occasions there were riots in the meetings, and Paul was obliged to use physical force to preserve order. Aquila saved his life from a brutal encounter of unknown nature, and this aid placed a seal of loyalty on his friendship which is of Biblical importance.

From Corinth to Paul in Ephesus Apollos brought reports of Christian activities. It grieved Paul that the Corinthians would not endeavor to lead the lives of true Christians. Apollos requested that some one else be sent to work at Corinth in his place, so Paul appointed his young friend Timothy and Erastus of Ephesus, to work there.

Chloe, a faithful worker, sent slaves with messages about the discord in Corinth. Stories which

came from Fortunatus and Achaicus were disquieting.

Paul realized that the situation was a serious one, and that he must get word to the Corinthians at once. Timothy planned to travel by way of Macedonia, which meant that it would be many days before his arrival in Corinth; so Paul wrote to the Corinthians at length. He dictated this epistle and Titus took it down. It proved to be a masterpiece of instruction for all peoples and ages.

Divisions and disputes caused much annoyance in church work. Paul knew organization to be necessary, but he realized the struggle it meant to maintain harmony at all times. Paul notified the Corinthians that Timothy would come to them to continue his work in their midst. "For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church. For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. What will ye? Shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?"

At times he was overwhelmed with num-

erous questions. Many asked about marriage, whether they should permit their daughters to marry; or if a man were a Christian and his wife refused to worship as he did, would he be justified in sending her away? He was asked by women how to dress, the colors to blend, and the most appropriate manner in which to wear the hair, also if they should assert equal rights in the temple. This was a laborious task for Paul, but he tried to give every one a satisfactory answer and manifest patient tolerance.

A message to all church organizations on earth was written by Paul which reads: "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let everything be done in Love." The last great words, "Let everything be done in Love," express the basic principle which will ultimately erase the world's warfare of every nature.

While idols flourished in Ephesus, Paul's influence for good spread to distant lands. Enemies arose among their people and tried to frighten Paul into silent submission. But he remained fearless "under the shadow of the Almighty."

In the market place in Ephesus, there were many shrines and charms sold. When many turned to the enlightened teaching of Paul, the

purchasers were not so numerous in the market. As people turned from false gods to the One God, they ceased to have any desire for the worthless idols manufactured and sold by their tradesmen. This infuriated the merchants, and they began to oppose the apostle in every possible way.

They decided to drive him out of the city. Demetrius, a rich merchant, called together potters, silversmiths, metal-workers, jewellers, carvers of metal and wood, butchers, and all other tradesmen who profited by the pagan worship of temple gods. He denounced Paul before assembled thousands saying: "Sirs, you know that by our business we have made our wealth, and you all see and hear that not only in Ephesus, but throughout the entire province of Asia, this Paul has persuaded people to turn away from buying shrines, declaring to them that things made with men's hands are not gods at all." Demetrius strengthened his plea by speaking of the threatening danger to their goddess, Diana. The people were then moved to emotional wrath. He gained their sympathy and coöperation through their own love of money, and the suggestion of their possible loss of it. Cleverly he pictured the market places after much more of Paul's teaching, as spots of

utter desolation. Shouts arose for Diana. It was decided to assemble all the citizens they could arouse into the vast theatre, and there make public charges against Paul.

Demetrius succeeded in stirring up the people, and the crowds continued to grow in size. Streams of raging citizens poured into the open-air theatre. Paul was not found at the time of the search, but the mob dragged Gaius and Aristarchus along brutally. Demetrius selected Alexander, the Jew, to speak to the throng about the matter, because he had a very loud voice. When they discovered that the speaker was a Jew, the people cried wildly, "Diana! Great is Diana!" Curiosity inflamed the spectators, although many of them did not know what it was all about.

The town clerk and keeper of the city records arrived on the scene, and it was evident then that they were assembled for business. He began with tact: "Men of Ephesus, is there a man here who does not know that this city is the keeper of the great temple of Diana, and of the image that fell down from the stars? Thus you have brought forth these two men (Paul's friends) who are neither robbers of the temples nor speakers against Diana. If Demetrius or any of those

who are with him have a case against any man, the city courts are open and weekly courts observed, and there are judges for the purpose of deciding who is right. Let them accuse these men before them in the proper manner." This angered Demetrius. The town clerk authoritatively assured the people assembled that the gathering was without reason, and would prove so in the eyes of the governor. Another victory for the Christians! Their banner in Ephesus was not to be uprooted or cast aside! The incident impressed Paul, but he felt that his enemies there would persist in trying to take his life, so he prepared to leave Ephesus. His three years' work in that district was successful, as it had been in Corinth. When he departed, hundreds of his loving followers stood upon the bank and watched the boat glide into the distance. Both men and women shed tears at his going. It was a touching scene of allegiance.

Far out at sea again! How like his own life was the turbulent sea: tossed to and fro by the wind of circumstance, driven by the great unseen force, restless, but never without the poise of purpose, agitated but ever knowing an inner repose!

Paul prayed earnestly for his friends Aquila and Priscilla, who suffered for their cause, and were forced to leave Ephesus. Their home had been his own; they shared the joys and hardships of discipleship together. So his concern for their welfare was a deep one of true friendship.

When Paul reached Troy, he was disappointed that Titus was not there as he expected. The first letter to young Timothy, full of instruction regarding congregations and concise teaching, was written about this time in his travels. During this year of his life, he began to look to others who could continue his earthly mission after he had passed on. His letters reveal these thoughts. Timothy was admonished to correct wrong teaching and instruct in wisdom.

"This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went on before thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; holding faith, and a good conscience, which some, having put away concerning faith, have made shipwreck. There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

"God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power and of love, and of a sound mind. Preach

the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. The time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

"Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things. The Lord knoweth them that are his."

He suffered the disaster of a shipwreck, and in the bitter cold, floated upon a piece of wreckage for a night and a day before he was finally rescued by a passing ship. At last he reached Philippi, drenched with the rains. Lydia welcomed him into her home again and nursed him back to strength and courage. His addresses to the people of Troy included references to the experiences which he and his coworkers endured. These tests brought them all into a closer human bond of sympathetic unity.

Titus then joined Paul and told him of false teachers who influenced many to follow their doctrines. Men who boasted of personal leader-

ship attempted to overthrow the good work that had been established. But there were ever-loving messages from devoted friends and associates throughout the field, and Paul was thankful for these expressions.

At Corinth his persecutors — "wolves in sheep's clothing" — repeated their attacks upon his character. They ridiculed his appearance, and "unworthy delivery of the scriptures." They accused him of posing as an apostle when he had no right whatever to that title. Then again they insisted that he was a Greek Jew and not a Jew of Jerusalem as they were; therefore he had no authority to teach! They objected to his collecting money everywhere for the poor Christians in Jerusalem, money that really should go to the temple. Malice, jealousy, slander, and lies poured down upon the faithful head of the unselfish martyr.

Trials seemed beyond human endurance sometimes, and his heart ached from the bitter injustice. The Corinthians were divided and many returned to their false gods. Paul appealed to them: "My mouth is open to you, O Corinthians, my heart is enlarged towards you, my children; be enlarged towards me. Be not joined with idolaters for it is light joined to darkness. Examine yourselves,

whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we seem as reprobates. For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth."

The truth that this buffeted apostle of Christ frequently toiled all night at the loom rather than accept money from any one, did not prevent the serpent's continuous attacks against his integrity. All amounts of money which were collected by him were contributions for suffering Christians in Jerusalem, who were undergoing direst hardships. He was sensitive on the subject of money, and many times hesitated to accept personal gifts from friends, for fear that they might misunderstand the true motives of his heart. This was an unnecessary attitude, because all his followers well understood the purpose of his life and its daily sacrifices for the good of humanity.

When he touched the vision of the realm of spirit in demonstration, he referred to the "thorn in the flesh" which acted as a hindrance to complete freedom. He said: "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. I take pleasure in

infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong. God's grace is sufficient."

His imperfect eyesight caused him annoyance, as did the extreme fatigue which crippled him at times during his strenuous pilgrimages. But he resolved these experiences into opportunities to prove God's allness, and rejoiced in the power which overcomes and heals.

The bronze and gold coloring of autumn covered the hills as Paul journeyed from Thessalonica to the quaint little town of Berea, where he spoke to the growing congregation there. He bade them a last farewell, for he would never return. He encouraged and strengthened them, and left stimulating lessons to help them carry on.

He returned to Corinth to the home of his friend, Gaius, where Christians greeted him to hear more of his teachings. He poured out his heart to his people in tenderest expressions of love. The suggestions of false teaching and lies were erased. Paul inherited his father's estate, and about this time was paid the sum of its sale value. This gave him ample funds for the continuation of his Christian work, and it was not necessary

for him to labor so hard at the looms in the nighttime, as in former years.

The words of Jesus urged him on and on: "Go into all the world, preach the gospel, heal the sick." The two commands in one became every Christian's duty! Jesus combined preaching and healing to be the rock (*petros*) foundation of the Christian churches.

His thoughts turned toward Rome and his friends Aquila and Priscilla who were established there. He was impelled to write a letter to the Romans whom he had never seen. This was the most learned of his letters, showing an advanced interpretative thought, and his profound early training of the Bible (Old Testament). Forethought and careful concentration are shown in this memorable epistle. Tertius, the most proficient of his numerous scribes, wrote this epistle for Paul, whom he served, with pride, as secretary.

Some of his words as recorded have resounded in every church on the face of the earth. "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. Be ye transformed by

the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good, the acceptable, and perfect will of God. If God be for us, who can be against us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Love is the fulfilling of the law."

In this great letter of salutations and important lessons, Paul asked for their prayers for his own protection. Dark forebodings shadowed his glorified outlook and fear knocked at the door of his consciousness and whispered, "death."

The messenger of the great epistle was Phoebe of Cenchrea to whom Paul referred thus, "I commend unto you Phoebe, our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: that ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you; for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also."

Although Paul had never visited the church in Rome, he was familiar with all their activities and addressed greetings to twenty-six men and

women by name. Among them were his friends the weavers, Aquila and Priscilla. Mary, a Jewish woman, was especially commended for her good and faithful work. It is believed by many that the greatest of Paul's epistles were those written to the Romans.

Paul planned to join a pilgrims' trip to Jerusalem, on a boat which stopped at many ports. He was commissioned to carry a vast sum of money with him for the urgent needs there. When this information reached the ears of his enemies among the Jews, they plotted to kill him on the trip. At the last moment as he was boarding the vessel, the plot was discovered by one of his coworkers; he was warned, and his life saved. Instead of sailing in a pilgrim boat to Palestine, he joined his workers Sopater, Aristarchus, and Secundus of Macedonia; Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia; and Timothy and Gaius of Galatia, to go to Philippi to hold the Passover there.

The Passover festival was not observed according to the teachings of his youth, but as Jesus interpreted it — symbolical only of the substance of life and continuity of its spiritual being.

They met in Lydia's house during the Passover week at Philippi, city of fountains. From there

the visiting Christians took a small coasting-boat to Troy. Luke accompanied them on the voyage. The weather was stormy, and the trip required five days of travel instead of the usual two days.

Luke's friendship was stimulating to Paul, for he was a humanist of great culture. His careful delineation, as revealed in his writings, proved of historical and artistic value. Luke's book of the Acts is compelling, and gives to mankind real characters to know and love as human beings. He was a Greek scholar and historian who deserves eternal reverence, and, for the documents of Paul's life, universal gratitude is due his worthy name.

CHAPTER XI

LIFE TO THE DEAD

WHILE their boat waited in Troy harbor for good weather, Paul joined the Christians of Troy. They seemed to confuse the interpretations of the Nazarene love feast with old pagan ceremonies they formerly participated in when attending the temples of the idols. This matter caused Paul perplexity, and he prayerfully tried to lead them into the right way of thinking. The meeting-place there was in a building three stories high. The large top room was used for services and was accessible, from the street, by an outside stairway of stone. On Sunday night Paul spoke there to his people. Hanging-lamps about the room furnished light; high above the heads were small, narrow windows — open for ventilating purposes. Paul spoke at length, for he may have realized they needed instruction, and also that he would never see them again. Words of living inspiration were uttered. It was almost midnight, and as he continued to speak, a piercing cry rent the air; the room was in sudden confusion. A youth named

Eutychus had fallen asleep on the window ledge, overbalanced "and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead." Paul calmly descended the outside stairs, knelt down by the body, and stretched forth his arm over him prayerfully. He kissed the lad's cheeks lovingly, and, turning to the wailing ones about him, said simply, "Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him."

"And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted." Fear was dispelled instantly, and the lad breathed freely. Paul returned to the meeting. They broke bread in Jesus' name and ate it in loving commemoration, for it was their last meal together. All night the crowd listened intently to his teachings, and when dawn crept over the hills and pastel tints shone into the windows, dimming the yellow glow of smoking lamps, the meeting adjourned.

While the morning dew still glistened on the hills, Paul set out to carry tidings to Assos, twenty miles away. There, with the devoted followers who waved good-bye, stood the lad who had fallen from the window. The power of God which restores life to the dead had touched his life, through Paul, and there was strange wonderment in his face.

Paul stopped at Miletus, the ancient city famous

for its beautiful carpets, but he did not speak to the people there. In a spirit of quietness and seclusion he sought strength in prayer — alone, as the Master often did. In those moments of meditation Paul wrote words which were as tears of his heart. "And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more." His grey head bowed in holy surrender to the will of God. It was a glorified farewell which left its echo of sadness.

Paul sailed out of the harbor of Miletus and along the coast of Asia. Numerous islands shone like emeralds mounted in a glittering setting of waves. Far in the distance he saw the island of Patmos, with its lonely barren caves where John the Divine, so beloved of the Father, was banished and wrote his book of visions, "to bear record of the word of God and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw."

The ship with a broad, white sail and the single mast, landed at the port of Tyre in Phoenicia, just north of Palestine. Paul soon located his co-workers, and related to them his trials and travels during the seven years' absence. Again he was warned that it would be perilous for him to re-

turn to Jerusalem, because of the intense hatred and resentment there. His visit at Tyre was brief.

All nature was effulgent with warmth and color, but within Paul's heart was the chill of winter. It seemed that he had reached the utmost in persecutions.

The Christians at Tyre, like those of Ephesus, were deeply touched by his sorrowful words of farewell, and they wept bitterly. Women and children accompanied him through the city gates and knelt down on the shore as he sailed away, offering prayers for his protection and good health. This all moved him to deepest appreciation as he watched the kneeling figures on the shore until his boat moved as a speck into the haze of the distance.

He stopped at Ptolemais and saluted the brethren, "and abode with them one day." At the harbor of Caesarea, Paul left the ship with students who showed him the way to the home of Philip, the evangelist.

For twenty years Philip had dwelt there, teaching and preaching with the loving help of his wife and four lovely daughters. He listened intently to Paul's numerous stories of adventures. His own life had been one of quietness and regularity, and Paul brought a stimulating sense of action into

his household. The family sat spellbound as he told of the five times that he had been scourged by the Jews, three times beaten with Roman rods, once stoned, and three times shipwrecked, and how he had floated for one day and night in the open sea. Then followed toils, travels, thirst, and many heartaches. Truly a martyr's record; he had not yet quaffed the bitter cup of experience to its dregs of agony! He related, "The city governor under King Aretas at Damascus guarded the gates in order to take me. I was lowered down through a window in the wall to escape." Philip and other teachers implored Paul not to proceed to Jerusalem, because they were certain that harm awaited him there; but nothing could deter him from going on his mission. He cared nothing for the tortures inflicted upon him. If he could sacrifice himself for the cause of Jesus Christ, he would gladly do so! The still small voice within bade him go on. The sadness of his followers at this time seemed to overwhelm him. "What mean ye to weep and break mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." And all of the men present realized that his decision was above the will of man. The bleeding footprints of Paul, the

apostle, were designed to trace the eternal pages of the Book of Books.

Jerusalem had become very unsafe. Not only because of indignant Jewish rabbis, but numerous Jewish Christians were clinging to traditional rites which war with spirit. A vicious new band of dagger men, known as the band of Zealots, had arisen since Paul's former visit. They accomplished most of their destructive work in secrecy. In Jerusalem, Paul, with several friends, stopped with Mnason in his palatial home. In the shadow of the trees of the courtyard where pure white doves fluttered, the Christians breakfasted in quiet seclusion.

James presided at the meeting-place, with the other elders about him. His long hair was as white as the snows and it curled about his sturdy shoulders in Nazarite fashion. Paul narrated, with impressing simplicity, the experiences he had endured for the cause of Christianity.

The freedom of Paul's thinking was not entirely comprehended by James and his workers, for they stirred about strangely when he explained that "God is no respecter of persons," and that Jew and Gentile alike may dwell in the peace of His spiritual temple.

While they had gained broad perspective in spiritual growth, through experiences and the world's activities, the Jerusalem Christians seemed to have remained stilted and narrow in their preaching and application of practical Christian rules. They still countenanced cruelty and condemnation, which Paul knew to be far from the Christ truth.

He learned that the Zealots included some of their own Christian converts, and even at that moment he was marked by spies for their vengeance. The Corinthian pilgrim ship spread venom on its arrival, and Paul was publicly accused of influencing people to forsake the laws of Moses. This was an untruth, for he taught only a spiritual interpretation of those laws, that they might all enjoy freedom from their ills and woes. They could not see that he worked for their good, that their own enslaved minds might be free.

He knew well what it would mean to be accused there of teaching against the laws of Moses. James suggested to him that he take four of the poorest Jews who had become Nazarenes, and go with them into the temple and accept the purification as the law demanded. He told him to pay their expenses and make offerings to the priests,

that the Zealots might believe that the accusations against him were false. James thought this procedure would assure his safety.

Paul considered carefully the idea of taking the four men in tatters and rags to the temple, paying for four rams, eight lambs, cakes, and oil for sacrifices, besides making gifts of money to the priests, and standing by the Jews while they had their long hair cut off and burned. Did not one know the teachings of Jesus, and their departure from all the ceremony of temple worship? He then knew that he could not blame their ignorance, for they were unenlightened, and the fact seemed revolting to him. He was told that it would help the four ragged men.

In the hopeless hour of indecision, he realized that it was too soon for men of Jerusalem to relinquish the rites they reverenced. The week to be spent in the temple suggested a waste of time. Paul thought of all the purposeful, useful things he could accomplish in that week, and it was all repellent to him. They could not understand true worship, and their ignorance was too cruel to countenance. James's plan was the only logical one for Paul's protection. For days it was necessary for him to go to the temple for the formulated

process of purification, and instead of protecting him, it aroused hostility on every side. After Paul's naked feet had trod the hot pavements for four or five days, he passed through the entrance of the white marble balustrade, unsuspicious of any surrounding turmoil. His enemies from Corinth and the Zealots of Jerusalem declared openly that Paul did not care for the laws of Moses, that his purification ceremonies were all a farce, for he did not sincerely believe in them. They gathered around him, like closing stone walls, with mad cries of "Men of Israel, Help! Help! Help!"

"And all the city was moved, and the people ran together" from every direction. Paul was soon in the midst of a vast pressing throng. They cried, "This is the man who speaks every place to all men, against the Jews and against our laws and the temple." Rage seized the crowd, and shrieks pierced the air. "He brought Greeks into the temple and polluted this holy place." Cries of "Blasphemy!" and "Defiler!" rang from court to court; loud charges resounded through the arches. Paul resisted, declaring that he was innocent. Many hands laid hold of him, and dragged him from the temple pavements, that none of his unworthy blood might be shed upon their sacred

tiles. They cuffed him out through the gates, murmuring curses upon his head and fiendish cries of "Death to him! Death to him!"

The Jews did not wish to kill him there with a sword, for it was their custom to punish by hanging, stoning, or beating with clubs. His persecutors kicked him along while the mob surged back of them.

Then one of the mob cried: "What of the penalty of killing a man without trial? What would Lysias, the Roman captain, say to this?" They could not take Roman rule into their own hands. High above from distant walls, motionless forms of Roman soldiers stood. They saw the uprising against Paul. There was a dark passage leading into the Jewish courts, which the Roman soldiers held and used during uprisings and riots.

Roman soldiers with uplifted spears dashed towards the mob. The cruel blows which fell upon Paul's harassed body were stopped, and the mob dispersed in fear of arrest and abuse.

The soldiers cleared a space around Paul by pushing people aside with their pikes, and striking them on the head with the shafts. Lysias, the chief captain, approached him and laid his hand upon his shoulder — a sign that no other hand

must touch him. Roman handcuffs were clamped upon Paul's wrists and fastened with brass chains to the wrists of two soldiers. Lysias inquired his name and charges of offence. He could not understand the maudlin answers of the motley crowd, and believed Paul to be the Egyptian rioter who had previously pretended to be the Messiah. The mob followed the soldiers, jeering and yelling, much to the annoyance of Lysias who loathed their babbling.

Paul was dazed from the blows and fell unconscious into the arms of the soldiers who walked with him. They carried him the remainder of the way and refreshed his worn, stained face with cold water. Paul revived and spoke to Lysias in Greek, much to the soldier's surprise. "Canst thou speak Greek?" Lysias inquired and Paul replied, "I am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city." Lysias then explained that he had mistaken the prisoner for the Egyptian. Paul said, "I beg of thee, suffer me to speak unto the people."

He presented a pathetic figure standing high upon the stairs with Roman soldiers framing his disheveled, bruised form. His torn brown cloak hung in shreds over his body; his bare feet were bloodstained and covered with the dirt of barbarism. With his face streaked and stained and

tears shining in his eyes, he obtained permission from Lysias to speak a moment. Hundreds of persecutors stood banked below, looking up and listening.

"And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in Hebrew, saying, 'Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence which I make now unto you.' And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence."

"I am verily a man which am a Jew born in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia." Then he told simply the story of his life training and his supreme awakening to Jesus' teachings. They listened calmly because they liked to hear about visions and voices of God. When he told the people that he had received the sacred command of Jesus: "Go, for I will send you out to foreign nations," contemptuous shrieks arose from the crowd. They exclaimed, "Away with such a fellow from the earth. Away with him!" The sound of Jesus' name enraged them. Some of the men threw down their cloaks in the dust, contemplating Paul's destruction without further ceremony. Others threw dirt up from the dusty ground, which showered back into their mean faces, forming hateful grit in their open mouths.

CHAPTER XII

A PRISONER OF GOD

LYSIAS led Paul through the prison door. The net had caught another martyr within its meshes.

The Zealots spread the news that Paul, the Pharisee of Tarsus, was held a prisoner in the castle. They decided to stab him if he gained release.

All that Paul uttered in Hebrew was not understood by Lysias, who regarded these sort of encounters as exceedingly distasteful. Soldiers were ordered to prepare Paul for flogging and to demand a confession from him.

They tied him hand and foot to a post with leather thongs. He had been flogged in the same way at Philippi and he knew how it felt to be struck on the naked back with knotted cords. When an officer approached Paul he protested in defence, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman citizen and who has not been condemned?" The question alarmed the soldiers and they hurriedly divulged their mistake to Lysias, who ordered the thong to be loosened at once.

Paul explained to Lysias, "I am a Roman citizen by birth, as my father was before me," and they realized that this citizen could not lawfully be scourged for all the Jews in Jerusalem.

Lysias knew that the trouble was the result of a religious upheaval of some sort, so he decided to call upon the Jewish Sanhedrin for advice about the whole matter.

On the next day Paul stood before the Sanhedrin council where Stephen once stood. He now understood what had illuminated Stephen's countenance, and was willing to sacrifice all for the privilege of drinking from Jesus' cup.

As he faced all those men who knew his history so intimately, he felt their critical scrutiny and curious interest. They all respected him as a man of learning and alert mental cleverness, but his departure from the religion of his fathers was unpardonable. Although like a pursued animal that is cornered, he wore a calm expression in his grey eyes — one of fearless defiance and determination.

And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, "Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." The shrill voice of Ananias piped out, "Guard, smite him on

the mouth!" But the guard took his orders from Lysias, and remained silent. Paul was a Roman citizen — and not a slave! There seemed to be a sleeping lion aroused within Paul's consciousness at the moment, for he replied angrily, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?"

"Would you revile God's high priest?" shrieked Ananias. Paul realized the error of his anger and offered a humble apology. (Several years later Ananias was stabbed to death in one of the city's drains, while hiding from the dagger-men.)

A heated discussion followed Paul's speech, and confusion arose between the Pharisees and Sadducees. Ananias, the glutton, was one of the most cruel of the Sadducees, who ridiculed the Pharisees' lowly material estates, and vigorously preached that life was not everlasting.

Militant wrangling resulted from Paul's defence, and he was removed from the angry countrymen and taken back to the castle for protection. Lysias talked with Paul privately and in extreme friendliness. He gave Luke and Timothy permission to visit the castle, where Paul walked about freely.

"And the night following, the Lord stood by him, and said, 'Be of good cheer, Paul; for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.'"

Paul's friends visited the castle daily, and brought choice food for him. They encouraged him in every possible way. There were long weary days of waiting, waiting — for what? Paul did not know!

The dagger-men vowed to stop at nothing until they had killed Paul. They told their plan to the white-robed priests, and solicited their help. It was their plan to have the priests bring Paul into the council room near them, where they could have an easy opportunity to kill him. Paul's nephew overheard the men plotting. He ascertained that Paul was their victim.

The youth told his mother, Paul's sister, who immediately sent him to the castle with a warning to Paul, that he might protect himself. In the quiet stone room of the castle, the lad told his uncle of the wicked plot to kill him; then he was taken to Captain Lysias with the story. Lysias was entertaining friends when the youth was ushered into his presence, and seeing that the boy hesitated to speak before others, he took him kindly

by the hand and led him to a secluded spot where they spoke in confidence.

The captain heard the whispered story of Paul's danger. The vile plot of the forty men and their curse bound them all to an agreement not to eat or drink until Paul's life had been taken. The lad told his Uncle Paul of the conference with Lysias, then ran swiftly through the dark streets to assure his anxious mother that he had delivered the important message which foiled the plotters.

In all riots, Lysias was held accountable for unexplained disorder. He was annoyed that the Jews attempted such a bold plot with a prisoner under his own imposing military protection. He hastily gave orders to soldiers that seventy horsemen and four hundred footmen, also spare horses for Paul, were to be ready to start at nine o'clock. They were commanded to conduct these people safely to Governor Felix at his royal castle.

Lysias wrote the following explanatory note: "Claudius Lysias sends greetings to the excellent Governor Felix. This man was seized by the Jews, and they were going to kill him when I came upon them with soldiers and rescued him, having heard that he was a Roman, but they said nothing against him which I thought deserved death or

punishment. I was told, however, that there was a plot against him, and I have at once sent him to you to be tried; and I have told his accusers that they must speak against him. Farewell."

It was evident that Lysias wished to appear heroic in the eyes of Felix, his superior officer. After finishing the letter, Lysias read it to Paul to give him confidence that he would receive justice with Felix. Lysias closed the letter with wax, and sealed it tightly with the Roman signet on his ring.

A moon shone down over the walls of the city as the hour of nine drew near, and there was a tramping of horses' feet from the castle stables. Out beneath a canopy of dancing stars, the procession wended its way in the direction of Caesarea, where Felix, in his gilded palace, enjoyed the cool sea-breezes.

Lysias smiled as he watched the traveling train disappear in the moonlight, for he thought about the forty mouths which would parch and starve because of their infernal plots.

Steadily on and on the train moved, taking Paul away from Jerusalem (the city of his early dreams) and the curse of the Jews. For a night and a day the hoofs resounded through the hills and valleys.

The trip was tiring to the bruised apostle, and his courage dragged its pinions, as a wounded dove.

When the priests and the murderous dagger-men learned that Paul had been safely conducted to Felix before whom they must make their charges, they were angry. They could do nothing, for Lysias had proven master of the situation.

Felix hated the Jews, and especially Ananias, the high priest. He had once been a slave, and had risen to his position through his brother's high favor with the emperor. He was married to Drusilla, a beautiful Jewish princess, the sister of Herod Agrippa. Several years previously he had persuaded her to desert her husband and marry him.

The letter of Lysias' seal was delivered to Felix.

"And when the governor had read the letter, he asked of what province he was. And when he understood that he was of Cilicia: I will hear thee, said he, when thine accusers are also come. And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgment hall."

Paul slept with the soldiers in their barracks, not in the loathsome, foul-smelling prison. He was privileged to see his friends from the outside at any time.

As was expected, Ananias came to accuse Paul before Felix. Paul's friends rallied around him as the crowds gathered in the big open court where Felix sat on his ivory throne. Tertullus, in his opening address, informed the listeners that Lysias used violent methods and took Paul out of their hands, ordering the accusers to appear before Felix for justice. The prevarication did not profit the case before Felix. This inaccuracy caused the governors to exchange glances significantly, and Paul was hopeful.

The meek, humble apostle Paul was then called upon for his defence, and before the throng he justified the Nazarenes and their activities. Continuing, he said: "This I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust."

Felix deferred them and said, "When Lysias, the chief captain, shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter." Felix did not know about religious wrangling, therefore a postponement of the case seemed advisable.

The disturbance over Paul was temporarily quieted, and a delay caused for Ananias, who was obsessed with the desire to condemn the prisoner to death. So it was a disappointed Ananias who rode back through the heat to Jerusalem with his lawyer and others.

Felix left Caesarea for a fortnight and returned with his beautiful wife, Drusilla, who was then about twenty years of age. He told her about Paul and his predicament. She understood somewhat of the religious differences of the Jews, and tried to explain to her husband what it all meant. She requested that Paul speak before them that she might hear him.

According to this request Paul was brought into their regal presence, and stood before the two, reclining upon their luxurious silken couches. Regardless of the rich surroundings, the muscular arms of Felix bespoke his former slavery days. Paul easily recognized Drusilla as one of his own race. She smiled as the slaves fanned her with ostrich feathers. Jewels glistened on her wrists and shapely throat. She had luminous dark eyes, cheeks like red roses, and hair that glistened like lacquered ebony.

Paul related the story of Jesus and his love, then

of John the Baptist. He paused occasionally as they questioned him about the Nazarenes' faith. Then he spoke specifically to Felix and Drusilla about self-control and keeping passions and mortal desires under restraint. He spoke of the higher life in Christ Jesus.

While Felix had no religion, he possessed a natural human curiosity about God. Something in Paul's words made him fearful, and an upheaval of wonderment urged him to say to the strange prisoner before him, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." And he trembled as he spoke.

Felix was not averse to accepting bribes, so he tactfully mentioned the subject of Paul's buying his freedom. But to Paul, this could never be arranged. He declared with much enthusiasm that he would neither pay money for his freedom, nor leave the prison without being proven innocent before all eyes. Consequently Paul discovered that Felix meant to keep him there indefinitely if the release funds were not forthcoming.

Paul waited and prayed in his uncertain abode in the soldiers' barracks of the Roman castle. Roman soldiers comprised men of all nations, forming a conglomeration of Egyptians, Ethiopians,

Italians, Greeks, and Asiatics who had been selected for their strength and physical endurance. Many lessons were unfolded to Paul as he waited there among the tramping soldiers and neighing horses.

One day Onesimus, the runaway slave of Philemon, sought Paul in the barracks. Philemon was a Christian of Colosse whom Paul knew. The slave worked his way by boat to come to Paul, for he had learned to love him in his master's house. Paul told the slave of primitive Christianity, he was baptized a Christian, and he implored the apostle to keep him there with him always as his own servant.

While Onesimus proved to be a great comfort and help to Paul, he felt that it was not right to permit the slave to remain and serve him as his own servant without Philemon's permission to do so. He sent an epistle to his friend Philemon and persuaded the slave to return to his former master. This petition to Philemon revealed Paul's ideas regarding holding Onesimus in bondage as a slave, and he asked his good friend to receive him back in love and forgiveness for the offence of his escape. The slave returned reluctantly, for he loved to be near Paul and hear the daily lessons

of Christianity and true freedom set forth with concise logic.

In the communication addressed to Philemon, Paul referred to himself as aged, although he was then but fifty-eight years old. Experiences had rendered Paul weary and slow of movement; his imprisonment saddened him. Even as a prisoner, his thoughts were poised in the realm of spiritual freedom and his continuous mental unfoldment knew no retarded continuity. A certain release was experienced when he communed with God in selfless surrender.

He kept in touch with all the small churches about him, such as the one in Laodicea, twenty miles away, and Hierapolis, a garden city situated in a growing valley of rich orchards, vineyards, and pasture land. He wrote, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things."

Glimpses of the Mediterranean toward the west inspired numerous references used in symbolic lesson. Frequently he bade his followers not to be tossed to and fro, carried about with every wind of false doctrine and teaching.

Many letters were addressed to friends whom he knew intimately, advising them upon subjects

which most closely touched and governed their lives.

Day after day he watched the soldiers about him in the barracks, adjusting their pieces of armor or polishing a breastplate in the bright sunshine. What immortal inspiration those moments held! Resolving daily things into thoughts! It is quite natural that he visualized these trivial commonplace happenings through interpretive, spiritual lenses, thus enriching his writings with lessons of simplicity and power. He admonished his followers to "put on the whole armor of God." "Gird your loins about with truth." "Have on the breastplate of righteousness." "And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." "We wrestle not against flesh and blood." "Above all take the shield of faith." "The helmet of salvation and the sword of Spirit which is the word of God." "I am an ambassador in bonds." "To live — is Christ!" Peaks of colorful instruction rose from the valley of shadows and Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled, "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

For two years Paul waited there in the soldiers' barracks, a prisoner. Felix encountered trouble

with the persistent Zealots and dagger-men who kept the country in a frenzied uproar of confusion. Agrippa, the brother of Princess Drusilla, wife of Felix, was given authority by the governor to manage the temple. With this appointment he dismissed Ananias and placed Ishmael, a proud, arrogant Sadducee, in his stead.

Paul could only yield to the supreme power and will of God while obeying the laws of state. He advised at this time, "Let every one obey those in higher power, for there is no power without God. Obey as a duty to your conscience."

Felix and his beautiful princess left Caesarea when Portius Festus was appointed governor. It was Festus' privilege to dwell in the beautiful Herod castle and to sit in the wondrous white ivory chair as others before him had done, and his general attitude was one of *non mi cale.*

The responsibility of Paul's case passed to Portius Festus, for "Felix, willing to show the Jews a pleasure, left Paul — bound!" A prisoner of God!

CHAPTER XIII

JUSTICE CRIES ALOUD

THE new governor, Portius Festus, made a spectacular entrance into Jerusalem amid much pomp and ceremony, with a train of associates and soldiers. The customary form of inauguration followed, and formally introduced the new governor to the people. Ishmael, the new high priest, had many complaints to be settled, but the most urgent for Festus' notice was the one against Paul. Importunate demands were made for his life, because of his supposed villainy of teaching against the temple laws. Enemies were vitriolic in their demands. Festus requested that the accusers come to Caesarea and declare their case in an orderly, legal manner, but they appeared reluctant to do so.

Upon Festus' return to the Herod castle, he summoned Paul in order to hear his remarkable story. Paul was asked if he were willing to return to Jerusalem for trial. After a moment's meditation he answered that Jerusalem held no justice for him. There was a large assembly present

when he desperately rose to a pathetic appeal. He cried before the people present: "I stand at Caesar's judgment seat where I ought to be judged. To the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest. I appeal unto Caesar! I appeal unto Caesar!"

The people were astounded at his request, but, according to the laws, it could not be ignored but must be granted. It was considered audacious to request a hearing before the court of Caesar.

The thought of pressing on to Rome fired Paul's ambition, and he spoke with sincerity and clarity, so that his words reached every man in the open court. However, his friends doubted the wisdom of his going to Rome.

Festus answered Paul's request by saying: "Thou hast appealed to Caesar — to Caesar thou shalt go!"

When the time came, Paul arranged to assume all the expenses of his trip to Rome. His Tarsus inheritance enabled him to pay the pledges and charges, as well as the passage fare for himself and a soldier guard. Poor men could appeal in the courts; without money to carry on their cases skilfully, appeals were worthless, because verdicts failed them through the lack of proper defence.

Gay festival days were celebrated in honor of the newly appointed governor. The fact that Paul, a prisoner of Christ, prepared to leave his abode in the barracks and to move towards Rome, was of no consequence to the citizens, but there was one guest present in the castle who inquired for Paul. This was Agrippa, the little king of the north near Gennesaret, brother of the handsome Drusilla. He brought his other beautiful sister, Bernice, with him to the holiday feasting and games. She was his constant companion and she influenced all his decisions.

A royal welcome was given to Agrippa and Bernice as their coach arrived, with richly harnessed horses, chiefs, and slaves in colorful array. They were escorted by many soldiers and guards, and a camel with the customary gift upon his back.

All this pomp and show overwhelmed the superstitious, simple-minded people of the city, and they diffidently bowed to such grandeur.

Brawny black slaves carried the couch where Bernice reclined, and their dark bodies shone in the sunlight like polished ebony.

As the royal party dined, Festus told his guests, Agrippa and Bernice, about Paul, the Tarsus

Jew in the brown cloak, and of the religious controversy which instigated his imprisonment. The guests wished to see Paul and to hear him speak, so Festus summoned him to appear before them the next day.

When the hour arrived, the royal room was made ready to receive Paul. Agrippa, arrayed in gaudy splendor, followed by Bernice, carried by her slaves, entered and took their places in the royal group with Festus, their host. Regimental officers and prominent men of the city were present. They stood in a group around Festus' ivory chair, critically waiting to hear Paul speak.

With thin chains jingling at his wrists, Paul moved before them. His bright striped kerchief hung loosely over his grey head. A soft silk girdle held his grey tunic in place. His arms and feet were bare.

He glanced about the audience and a trace of astonishment flashed in his keen grey eyes as he beheld the unveiled, famous Jewish princess whose statue he had often seen in Athens — Bernice!

Paul silently awaited his introduction by Festus. All listeners turned to Festus as he announced that he had found Paul to have many enemies who demanded his life. He stated that he found noth-

ing which justified a penalty of death, but he could not send him forth to Rome without a just reason for his appeal. That, Festus continued, would necessitate a logical, written report such as was expected by the courts of Rome. And he added, "It seemeth unreasonable to me, King Agrippa, to send a prisoner to Rome and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him." Agrippa then condescendingly bestowed upon Paul the privilege of speaking. "Paul, you are permitted to speak for yourself!" Then Agrippa sank back into the silken cushions to hear Paul speak.

Paul knew that he could speak to Agrippa with perfect confidence and freedom because he was not prejudiced, nor biased by teachings of the rabbis, nor was he allied to any definite ritualistic devotion. He was a worldly-wise prince, receptive to the convincing words of the humble apostle. Paul said: "I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews, especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews; wherefor I beseech thee to hear me patiently."

Bernice played with her fan as Paul's story

about the heavenly vision rang out to the listeners. Agrippa was attentive, for he was cognizant of all the priests' persecution of Paul for his preaching the gospel to strangers and foreigners. When Paul spoke of Christ as risen from the dead, Festus interrupted saying, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." Considering the stories wild and improbable, Festus appeared disgusted. Paul's rich tones echoed through the gilded hall in renewed strength and power. "I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. The king to whom I speak freely knows about these things." Then turning his earnest glance upon Agrippa, he anxiously inquired: "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." Agrippa hesitated then answered, "You could make me a Christian with but little persuasion, Paul."

Paul was grateful to hear any man admit the Christ truths to be powerful, and he resumed his talk with a renewed tenderness, addressing his words principally to the king.

"I would to God that whether with little or much, not only you but all who hear me to-day might become as I am!" His head sank on his

breast and he murmured sadly as he lifted up his manacled wrists significantly, "Except for these chains."

This experience thrilled Agrippa, and he wondered if he had manifested weakness in having been so deeply moved by this apostle's preaching. After Paul returned to the barracks, Agrippa sat at feast with Festus, Bernice, and a few others, and declared firmly to Festus, "This man has done nothing to deserve punishment or death."

Emperor Claudius expressed his gratitude to Herod Agrippa for services rendered, by having a brass tablet put up in his honor, and bestowing the power upon him to rule over the country of his grandfather, Herod the Great. Herod Agrippa was far from being saintly, and while posing as a strict Pharisee, he wrought many changes at Jerusalem which included the appointment of Gamaliel as president of the Sanhedrin. But when he returned to Caesarea, he laid aside the Pharisaical pose and relaxed into his usual profligate role of Roman roue. He played the game both ways with the people. He persecuted the Nazarenes to please the Jews — more for effect than from malice. He caused James, the humble Nazarene fisherman, to be imprisoned and be-

headed, as Herod the Fox had sentenced John the Baptist. Seeing that his methods pleased the powerful Sanhedrin, Herod had Peter imprisoned, with the intention of having him killed at a convenient time after the Passover festival, but Peter escaped miraculously and fled to Jerusalem.

King Agrippa rode to Caesarea for the games and national festivities, and when he entered the vast amphitheatre, the multitude sat breathless as he took his seat. His robes were rich and shining, he wore a crown of precious jewels — and much authority. He was the guest of honor.

It was the day of youth. Bouts of wrestling, fighting, leaping, singing, and dancing all held their respective places on the programme. When Agrippa arose to make his last memorable speech, the gold threads of his robe shone in the sunlight with scintillating sparkle. As he had previously been quarreling with the Phoenicians over their grain ships, he spoke with fire and sharpness. His eloquence resounded in the vast arena. The people were perfectly silent. He was a trained orator and knew well the psychological science of influencing audiences as he wished by mental suggestions. When he ended his speech the people cried, "It is the voice of God! It is the voice of

God!" Then a sudden shout of alarm pierced the air. "The king is ill!" The sparkling crown of jewels fell to earth. Agrippa's prostrate body was carried away through the resplendent flower gardens, which were still fresh with the dews of springtime. Within the week the king passed away.

The Jews mourned him in an ashy way, declaring that this tragedy had come because Agrippa permitted the people to call him a god.

With the passing of Herod Agrippa, Jerusalem lost its last Jewish king. Paul gleaned information of Agrippa's demise from traveling merchants and sea tradesmen who visited Antioch with their wares.

Because Paul had already appealed to the Roman courts, the governor, Festus, could not set Paul free. The prisoner would have to follow the course of his own choosing. Paul never realized how close he had been to freedom during his last few hours at Caesarea.

Festus completed detailed plans for Paul's trip to Rome, and specified that he was to be escorted under the personal charge of Julius, an officer in the Augustine Band, one of the most efficient Roman regiments.

Paul's friends rallied around him as he prepared to depart. Their hearts were heavy with sadness as they showered their *bon voyage* gifts of love upon him. In those days it was not unusual to see a man shed tears of grief; so when Paul's boat sailed out over shining waters, there were many moist eyes peering from the shore, and faithful hands waved farewell until distance enfolded the sails into indistinctness.

Luke, the physician, and Aristarchus of Thessalonica, wishing to make this trip with Paul, accompanied him listed as servants.

It was late in October and the winds were uncertain. The travelers were driven into sheltering ports several times, to change vessels. Rain and wind lashed their faces as they made every effort to cover the required leagues. Their vessel, a grain-boat under the Egyptian flag, was beaten and tossed and whipped like a tiny bark by the angry waves. Struggling and drifting, they made little headway for many weeks. Although the weather was threatening, Julius, the soldier, urged the captain to continue sailing toward their destination, for he feared that the icy claws of winter would soon be upon them. And if they were caught by treacherous elements they could move

nowhere with safety, until March or April.

They attempted to land at the small island of Clauda for shelter and drinking-water. Drenched with the driving rains and surrounded by black waves, heaving and hissing about them, they found it necessary to throw all cargo overboard to save the ship and passengers, as the boat sank lower and lower into the water.

Paul clung to the twisted ropes of the rolling boat and sleep closed his eyes. He had a dream. It was a vision of heaven — a perfect realm of contentment, of God's peace and relief from all earthly woe. When he awoke he was refreshed, and with vigor he offered encouragement to those about him who suffered from fear and exposure. He said: "Now I exhort you to be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying: Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar; and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer; for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island." Thus Paul prophesied the wreck upon an island.

His wisdom inspired confidence and trust among many of the desperate men. Some of the superstitious passengers began to fling gifts into the sea as offerings to false gods whom they implored wildly in their distress. The names of "Minerva," "Venus," and "Neptune," loudly rent the storm-ridden air. The heart of Paul turned to the great "I Am" who governs all things even during this perilous experience in Adriatic waters. Fourteen days had passed since they left Crete. About midnight of the fourteenth day, desperate cries of "Breakers! Breakers!" arose, as mad waves were distinctly heard to dash over near-by rocks, and they all "wished for the day."

Four anchors were instantly thrown over, and the boat stopped. Several sailors were discovered trying to escape with their lives by stealthily lowering a small boat. A soldier's swift sword cut the ropes of the small boat, which fell into the darkness of the night with a loud splash.

They waited for the light of dawn.

CHAPTER XIV

SHIPWRECK AND MIRACLES

At last dawn came, and the men began to fight for life and the shore. There were many prisoners on board who were going to Rome, but they were chained together more like dogs than men, and treated with much less consideration than men give their fine horses. Julius quickly demanded that these prisoners' chains be unfastened, that they might be released to swim to the shore. Then a battle with the surf ensued. Men leaped wildly into the foaming, raging waters. Others, fastened to floating planks like terrified animals, were riding the waves with glassy countenances of fear and the pallor of death.

The ship slowly yielded to the dashing, slashing knives of the sea. It was slivered, severed, and soaked with the cutting waves. Bruised and bleeding they ploughed through the savage waters and reached the shore. Driving rain now came down in torrents. Natives witnessed the shipwreck from their caves and huts on the shore. They saw the staggering, half-drowned men land

on their shores of Malta — formerly a part of the Roman province of Sicily, but now a possession of England.

The men suffered from the cold and were glad to accept the kindness of the natives, who proffered them the comfort of their fires.

"When Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand." The natives, observing that he was a prisoner, by the brass chain hanging from his wrist, believed that he had tried to escape his punishment, and in righteous vengeance, a viper fastened upon him to cause his death. Paul gazed at the viper and calmly "he shook off the beast into the fire and felt no harm."

"They looked when he should have swollen or fallen down dead suddenly; but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god."

The shipwreck and storm from which Paul escaped, are vividly portrayed in the New Testament according to Luke, the physician, who was one of the companions of Paul on this journey.

The natives took the shipwrecked men to

Publius, the chief man of the island, for care and shelter. He personally cared for the Christians in his own home, for three days.

The father of Publius was dangerously ill "of a fever" and "to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, . . . laid his hands on him, and healed him." After this demonstration of God's presence with Paul, many "others also, which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed."

There was nothing for the shipwrecked passengers to do but remain on the island, so they erected a temporary camp to house their number during the severe winter months. There was only one ship within a near-by harbor, and that was a large grain ship from Alexandria; however, Julius thought it advisable not to enter the Alexandrian boat.

Alexandria, known as an early home of bitter intolerance, was the most important colony of Jews, in point of culture, wealth, and arrogance. Cicero referred to Alexandrians as "slavish to the core."

During the months which followed Paul became endeared to the people of the island. He closely adhered to the command of Jesus to "Go into all the world, preach the gospel and heal the sick."

He could not forget, as many of Jesus' followers do, that to "heal the sick" was a direct command of Jesus without reservations or compromise. He gave humanity a vital lesson by his example of doing the works of God wherever circumstances led; accomplishing that which was near at hand, and resolving things into thoughts.

February brought pleasant weather and they sat sail toward Rome in the ship *Twin Brothers,* with its wooden figurehead of Castor and Pollux looking into the water from the bow, and a large white eye painted conspicuously on one side, to please the sailors' superstitious whims.

The natives of Malta regretted to see Paul and the others depart, and showed their affection by presentations of gifts and abundant supplies for the rest of the journey.

Syracuse, the ancient port of the island of Sicily, was the next stop for the travelers. They remained there for three days.

They viewed Etna's burning mountain-cone which shone amongst the hills, flamed fire by night, and was a moving grey by day. They gazed through the Strait of Messina into the harbor of Italy, a magic shore of entrancing beauty.

They passed the bewitching island of Capri,

then Capenella Point. Across the Bay of Naples they viewed the floating trails of Vesuvius' smoke, forming myriad pictures against the blue background of the sky. The mirrored waters enfolded the Bay of Puteoli, the seaside resort of noble families.

The passengers of the *Twin Brothers* disembarked in the renowned Puteoli, at the long pier of black bricks made from the lime of Vesuvius.

At last Paul's feet touched the soil of sunny Italy. Spain and Italy were countries he had always wished to visit. On the way from the harbor to the city, Paul and his friends saw a great, square monument in the principal street. It was erected in honor of Emperor Tiberius, for his kindness to the cities of Asia after a destructive earthquake. On the square base of the monument were carved the figures of twelve beautiful women, each representing a city; Ephesus occupied the most conspicuous position.

What memories touched Paul's mind as he gazed upon symbols of cities where he had lifted high his lamp of Christ in illumination and received the cruel pangs of the persecutors' lash at every turn!

March donned her garments of early spring-

time as Julius ordered the soldiers to resume the journey by land. The road into Rome was a long one, and the best available horses were given to Paul and his companion.

The horses tramped steadily on toward the Appian Way, named for Appius Claudius who made it at a tremendous expense. Romans were famed for their road-building, and Appius earned his notable place in the annals of history as a foremost authority in road-building.

They crossed the unique Pontine marshes in canal boats which were pulled by indolent mules. Horace, the poet of Rome, and Vergil, the bard, had crossed the same way thirty-seven years before.

Puteoli friends hastened on to the Christians of Rome with the news of Paul's coming. They were grieved to learn that he came in chains, a prisoner, for they loved him with a great devotion. Nero was known as a merciless fiend, and they feared for Paul's safety.

When Aquila and his wife heard of Paul's early arrival, they set out with several relatives of Paul's, Junia, and Andronicus, to meet him at the Appius market, at the Roman end of the canal, not knowing that he would proceed through the marshes.

When the brown-cloaked figure was seen among the armored soldiers, the bright brass chain dangling from his wrists made their hearts sink with sad heaviness. They hastened to greet him with messages that the Christians of Rome were eager to welcome and hear him. Paul seemed to be ever conscious now of the prisoners' chains and their perpetual dirge of bondage.

The travelers passed "Three Taverns," where Cicero had once sipped wine and changed horses. At this point of the journey, other loyal friends from Rome came out to welcome Paul and pledge their steadfastness.

Throbbing with humanity's constant pulse, the Appian Way unfolded endlessly, like a great ribbon, stretching into the very heart of Rome itself.

Rich Romans in gorgeous attire rode by in gilded carriages, and chariots bedecked with brilliant colors rolled along beneath the smiling sun. The way was colorful with picturesque barbarity, and sights of pagan intoxication moved on all sides — for the eyes of the people.

Rome! To enter Rome! Paul's ambitious mission approached realization!

To voice his message within those walls and turn carnal hearts to God was indeed an ambition

of sacred import! Did he consider that the temple of Hercules looked down upon his small stature and ordinary appearance as he passed? Did it impose a feeling of self-pity upon his thought?

Julius pointed with pride to the monument of the distinguished Julian family, explaining to Paul that the ashes of his ancestors rested there. Paul saw the home of Seneca, the renowned statesman, brother of Gallio, his gentle, loving friend. Gallio, his friend! And he remembered the words of Cicero: "Friendship is the only thing in the world concerning the usefulness of which all mankind are agreed."

CHAPTER XV

BONDAGE OF ROME

ROME, where Nero ruled with imbecile caprice, unfolded before Paul's eyes — a chanting, mocking revelry to idols of the gods. The very atmosphere seemed devoid of the breath of God. It was stifling with its monuments and orgies dedicated to depraved emotions.

Nero ruled without dignity or intelligence. A love of praise played upon vanity and his mad aspirations. For example, he insanely drove around the huge circus arena with a four-horse chariot in the races, to satisfy his love of applause. The people shouted wildly at his pranks, but in secret they were filled with contempt and disgust.

In Rome, Paul was given the privilege of living in the house for which he paid, in preference to occupying the regular prisoners' quarters in vaults beneath the palace buildings. In this way he was free to have his followers with him while awaiting his trial.

The letter to the Christians at Colosse may have been written soon after his arrival in Rome.

At the end of Timothy's copy, he concluded this epistle with a personal message broadly scrawled with a trembling, chained hand.

The stress of years of service in an age of turmoil weighed heavily, as his letters of resignation reveal. Withal there shines a beacon light of victory — battles fought and won, and a human personality submerged into divine selfhood for the service of all mankind.

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Put off anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communications out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him."

"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And

above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men."

"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time! The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen."

The wheels of justice moved slowly in Rome. Several Jewish priests waited three years for a hearing. They were not released until Josephus, the great historian, pleaded for them. Jews were despised in Rome, and they lived secluded lives in districts apart, as in many cities elsewhere.

Most Christians kept their faith a secret, for the antagonistic attitude against the teachings of the gentle Nazarene was prevalent, and Christians were given no tolerant consideration. Paul would not pose as a secret Christian. He gladly admitted to the world that he was a Christian, and gloried in the faith of Christ Jesus.

Paul taught that he was made free by his faith, although, to the material senses, he was a prisoner with the ever-clanking chain of captivity. He

could not deny Christianity before men. Soon the gospel which he taught, and the healings which he brought about, wooed to his doors many wanderers from all walks of life.

Patiently he waited for trial, which would mean his ultimate freedom in the eyes of the world. Days wore on and on into months, just as clouds disappear before the gaze of the changeless sun. At times the embers of hope seemed extinguished!

Loving friends at Philippi sent a substantial sum as a love offering to him, knowing the power of money in all Roman cases. Epaphroditus delivered it, although he almost perished from illness en route. The practical gift of love may have been suggested by Lydia, the merchant, for she often communicated with the wandering apostle and closely watched his steps to martyrdom.

Paul's wishes were indulged by the Romans to a surprising degree. His loving demeanor and confidence, made him distinctly receptive of the kindly treatment which he received at their hands.

Timothy wrote at Paul's dictation as in former days. Letters were sent back and forth without interference of the Roman soldiers, who watched, with keen eye and listening ear, everything that happened.

Nero's conduct continued to be that of an incorrigible boy. He was the twenty-five-year-old son of the late Emperor Claudius. His mother had pushed him into the limelight, and made him emperor at the age of seventeen years, in preference to his half-brother, Britannicus, who was in reality the heir to the throne. When Nero had been emperor but one year, he ordered Britannicus poisoned, so that he was well out of the way. The indulgent mother who had permitted Nero's unbridled passions to govern his youth, became the object of his cruel hatred. He ordered her put to death. Nero employed ruffians who tried to drown her. Failing, they finally stabbed her.

He married the old emperor's daughter, Octavia, the sister of Britannicus. This gentle girl, whom he never loved, became degraded, and he immediately arranged her death that he might take Poppaea, a favorite, as his wife. He tried to avoid arousing suspicion or hostility by such proceedings.

Paul, the saintly apostle, would take his case for justice to Nero, the mad emperor of Rome! Seneca, Nero's old tutor, took chief charge of his public affairs, with Burrhus, an honest man, heading the soldiers' contingent.

Perpetual unrest governed the young ruler's

mind, and his escapades flame through the pages of history as carnal blotches upon the records of time. He not only wanted to be worshipped by all as a mighty ruler, but he longed to be recognized as the best singer of the age, the best player, poet, dancer, and charioteer in the world — a paragon of all arts!

The situation was a pathetic one, for his wickedness prevented the possession of a sense of humor. The soldiers were forced to help carry out all his mad ambitions for applause. They filled the vast theatre to overflowing when his husky, cracked voice piped forth. They planted groups throughout the crowd to applaud vociferously. The trembling, nervous hand of the indulged Nero played the lyre; his weak legs danced, and he recited his own poetry, which did not have a trace of intelligence in its composition. All government employees were forced to join in the merrymaking. If they were undiplomatic enough to refuse, they faced death.

A Roman soldier described Nero to Paul as a pale, anemic-looking object with long yellow hair, cruel eyes like two small beads, a heavy chin, a stout body, plump with the bloat of wine, and always clasping a silk scarf tightly against his

throat to protect his vocal chords from the sharp winds.

In Rome, work was an activity meant for slaves. The afternoons were devoted to sports, and thousands gathered each day to see the soldiers' sham fights, or run, jump, or swim in the river below Nero's bridge. A human line cheered from the shore as swift figures of swimmers dashed by in the river races. A continuous round of exciting entertainments were featured for Nero's amusement.

Housewives in Rome cherished images of Vesta, which they kept behind a little curtained shrine. They believed that this goddess was closely allied to household, fireside, and harmony, so they frequently appealed to Vesta for her guidance.

The first door-wreaths of green cypress branches, signifying death within the house, were used in Rome.

Seekers from all ranks visited Paul's house for his help and council. The slave with welts of abuse bulging from his black back, and the delicate woman whose hands were snowy white from bathing in goat's milk! They learned from the humble apostle that their bodies were spiritual temples of the living God and embodied all right ideas.

During Nero's reign, half the Roman population

lived on the emperor's corn. They boasted that their cry was always, "Give us bread for nothing and games forever." Nero thirsting for more intoxication in power and praise for his absurd pranks, caused more and greater theatres to be built in which to perpetrate his inanities. Like a wild and restless animal, he had to be fed with the tonic of the senses. He wallowed in the dregs of carnality.

At this period there were numerous circuses (with raging animals, and gladiators fighting and leaping about in bloody combat) for Nero's amusement. But those scenes soon waned, for their brutality held nothing new or thrilling. He craved greater cruelty, so bands of slaves were brought into the circuses and fed to the yawning, hungry mouths of wild beasts. Human sacrifices were made ruthlessly, to entertain Nero and his wanton cortège of flatterers. Thus barbarous cruelty became a sport in Rome — a mere incident in the most wicked era of the whole world's history, when Christians were used as fire kindling. How inconsistent it seemed that Christianity gleamed in its first, white flickering in the age of lowest debauchery!

Some of the prisoners who were saved with Paul

from the shipwreck while en route to Rome, were led into Nero's arena of horror and torture.

The next degraded desire which Nero wished to execute was to perform in the Circus Maximus, which attracted the lowest class of the people, known as the scum of Rome. Burrhus, discouraged by his command over the soldiers, tried to persuade Nero not to do this thing which was so beneath him in every way. Soon Burrhus mysteriously sickened and died. Whispers about the city muttered, "Poisoned." Nero's young favorite, Tigellinus, was given Burrhus' place and he enthusiastically set about planning all manner of debauchery to please the wanton ruler.

On a plea of ill health, Seneca asked to be retired from duty that he might study philosophy. Strange to relate, the request was granted, and he was permitted to live. All whom Nero envied or disliked were instantly put to death.

He carried out his wild desire to perform as a common charioteer. As the various chariots assembled, Nero's shone in the light — all (white) ivory and burnished metal with four jet-black horses gorgeously plumed. He wore a transparent shimmering robe of gold, clasped at his shoulder by an amethyst. He drove to the first position of

winner as the programme was arranged. Amethyst ribbons bore his victorious colors among the others of brilliant red, blue, green, and yellow.

It was customary to signify the start of the chariot race by dropping a white handkerchief from the emperor's box. Then began the whirling whips and leaping horses. Horses running abreast of Nero quickly fell back. Every one understood that all the praise and glory of the day was to go to Nero. Catering to a fool on a self-made pedestal was a tiresome occupation, but the Nero game had to be played, and incurring his displeasure meant death. A wreath of green leaves was placed upon the weak head of Nero as winning charioteer, but back of the thunderous cheers were ridicule and dismay at such human folly.

While Paul lived for two years in the house which he engaged in Rome, conditions under Nero's direction grew worse for the Christians. Paul's associates moved about from town to town with his messages and letters, which were divinely designed to strengthen the firm, substantial weaving of the fabric of Christianity in the world, that it might some day hold all the earth in its tender embrace of unity.

Then days of despondency handicapped Paul.

He often felt that Death, that last enemy, was upon him. Comparing himself with the gladiators in the Roman arena, he said that he had fought a good fight, he had finished the race, he had kept the faith; his crown was not to be one of the faded leaves such as tempted Nero, but a crown of rejoicing from God, the One and Only Superior Judge.

Clouds of persecution hovered over Christians and Jews alike in Rome, and Paul trembled as he waited from day to day to utter the speech of his defence before the Romans. Within the apostle lived the spirit of courage which would not be chained nor submerged, for it was a living, flaming thing of immortal strength. He surrendered all to God, and listened ever for His voice.

We do not know definitely where Paul was at the time of the great fire. The man with the brown cloak, who followed so closely the Master's teachings after he found them, fades from history as the dwellings faded before the fire.

Rome burned for nine days unceasingly. In desperation the poor citizens who had been mesmerized to praise their ruler, turned to blame and curse him then for the fire. They resented the fact that he rested in the cool breezes at Antium

when the first flames broke out in the city. When the word was dispatched that Rome was burning, he stayed in comfort and replied with a flippancy which angered the people. He would not return until he had learned that his favorite gardens were in no danger of the fire's parching tongue; then calling his few devoted friends about him, he watched the fire from his palace on the hill and delightedly sang to them the ballad of the burning of Troy, accompanied by his own twanging on the lyre.

It was a strange angle of fate that caused Nero to provide dwellings for the common people in huts across the Tiber, and plans were soon in his hands for rebuilding Rome with wide, straight streets. He was overheard to say, "Perish the world in fire in my lifetime," which plainly suggested the prattle of disordered thinking.

Suspicion arose among the people, and when it bore the tenor of personal danger, Nero cunningly turned the eyes of the Romans away from his own guilt by pointing to the Christians. They were marked as the perpetrators of the crime of destruction.

Soon the Romans decided that it was the creeping Jews, the "Jewish pests," who would not be

banished, but crawled back into their midst as Christians. They declared that the fire started near the Circus Maximus, where many of them peddled their shoddy wares.

Crazed with excesses, the wild young Nero, fired with many lies brought to him, began his wicked persecution of innocent Christians. Nero spared no one. Neither sex nor age mattered to him, and he resorted to all the most dreadful tortures known to man.

The Latin historian Tacitus narrates that those who professed their Christian faith were taken and destroyed first. Was Paul among those sufferers? We do not know!

Many were wrapped in skins and destroyed by mad dogs; others were crucified on wooden crosses, and many served as human torches, burning at night to light a thoroughfare. Nero's own gardens were used for much of this kind of horror, which he demanded to satisfy his abnormal cravings.

The Romans observed that the peaceful Christians were facing their death fearlessly, with prayers falling from their lips, so soon to be stilled by the price of martyrdom.

On one day the circus floor was thick with crosses of the Christians. Did Paul stand among the

leading Christians of Rome, strengthening and admonishing them that to wear the crown they they must bear the cross? We do not know.

One night the garden of Nero was aglow with the light of human torches which the mad ruler watched with diabolical delight.

A delirious madman with shattered health and diseased brain, Nero could not continue on his road of infamy. He fled in cowardice to a country villa one day, clenching fast a golden box which held his secret poison. Terrified by sounds of approaching soldiers who followed his mysterious departing steps, he instantly placed a dagger to his breast, and a slave drove the weak blade home. At thirty years of age he perished — and no one mourned the loss.

Within this flaming, stained frame of Roman paganism flashed the last glimpse of the wonderful human portrait of Paul, the beloved apostle, to the eyes of humanity. Dimly it appeared as a misty etching, with countenance illumined with divine light. Smoky shadows and the fog of persecution then obstructed the vision, and amid the weird satanic patterns designed of carnality, Paul disappeared. No one definitely knows his fate as a leading Christian of Rome. Men saw his

steps of martyrdom press no farther along earth's shore of time, but his teachings are immortal, and they shall press on down throughout eternity. Through all the ages they will ring in vibrant praise of the living God.

The highest peaks of man's spiritual understanding are glorified by Paul's torch of enlightenment, and the breezes of eternity shall forever sing the life, truth, and love of Paul's blessed purpose into the hearts of all mankind.

Chosen by the loving Father as a messenger of the Christ truth, he trod the thorny road on and on to eternal Peace and the love of God which is divine.

Paul, the beloved one — Apostle of Adoration!

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